

# EVOLVE OR DIE: THE U.S. ARMY'S DARWINIAN CHALLENGE

A Monograph

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## ABSTRACT

EVOLVE OR DIE: THE U.S. ARMY'S DARWINIAN CHALLENGE,  
by LTC Todd A. Schmidt, 66 pages.

In an effort to ensure future success and relevance, the Army, at the end of 2012, published its *Army Capstone Concept* (ACC). The ACC sets an azimuth into the future and lays a course for the Army as it moves towards the future operational environment (FOE). The ACC advocates for an institutional and operating force consisting of organizations, leaders, soldiers, and civilians trained and educated, exhibiting and imbued with the principle of “operational adaptability.” Organizational and operational adaptability are dependent, first and foremost, on developing the individual soldier. With the American soldier as its first priority, the Army can overcome the Darwinian challenge of evolving from its capstone concept to meeting the challenges of the FOE.

General Peter J. Schoomaker's tenure as Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), and events leading up to it, provide a case study demonstrating success and failure in leading organizational adaptation. The case study covers the decade leading up to Schoomaker's tenure as CSA; how he ultimately decided and implemented the final form and structure of transformation; and how his decisions, made while the Army was at war, were all dynamics of his being the “change-agent” to the Army's culture and organization. It demonstrates desirable and undesirable traits in Army organizational practices, processes, and culture; as well as leadership traits that help and hinder innovation and adaptation. These lessons offer a road map and way ahead as the Army faces an uncertain, unpredictable, complex, non-linear, and chaotic FOE. Following the case study, a comparison is drawn between the strategic-political-economic environment in which the Army found itself in the 1990s and the present. Comparing similarities, as well as the problems and challenges posed by expectations in the FOE, provides Army senior leaders with a guidebook of lessons learned to avoid pitfalls of the past. It also provides recommendations for the future to navigate challenges the Army faces now, as well as in the years and decades ahead.

Historically, the most successful organizational adaptation initiatives focus on organizational culture, professionalism and professional development of the individual soldier first, rather than investing in a priority of effort to improve organizational structure and technological advances. Amateurs focus on developing, designing and equipping organizational structures to cope with future challenges. Why? Because, it is not very complicated in the grand scheme of the adaptation process to change the outward appearance of an organization. Rather, great leaders, true professionals, leading the most successful efforts in organizational adaptation, understand that the most difficult challenges are internal. Changing the way an organization thinks, learns and acts takes the greatest skill and leadership. Knowing that it can only be done by guiding, developing, educating, and leading a team effort from the bottom up, is the only way to achieve lasting change.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?" said Alice.  
"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.  
"I don't much care where--" said Alice.  
"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.  
"--so long as I get SOMEWHERE," Alice added as an explanation.  
"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."<sup>1</sup>

I am very grateful to a number of folks that have helped me in the process of writing this monograph. Dr. Peter Schifferle and LtCol Darrel Benfield (USMC) dutifully took their valuable time to guide and mentor me along the way. I had the phenomenal privilege of interviewing an all-star cast of characters in the endeavor of discovering the recent history of Army Transformation and Brigade Modularity, particularly from 2003–2005. I owe a debt of gratitude to General (Ret) Peter J. Schoomaker, Lieutenant General (Ret) David Melcher, Lieutenant General (Ret) William Webster, Colonel (Ret) Michael Shaler, Colonel (Ret) Douglas Macgregor, and Colonel (Ret) Jeffrey Witsken for taking the time to share their viewpoints and insights into a period of tremendous organizational change and adaptation within the Army. To Major General Gordon Davis, Jr., Colonel Thomas Graves, and Colonel (Ret) Richard Pedersen, I owe a debt of gratitude for helping me to understand the importance of Professional Military Education and the concept, philosophy, and system of Mission Command. I very much appreciate the Combined Arms Research Library Staff for their assistance in my research and patience in dealing with my consistently overdue books. Finally, to my wife, thank you for putting up with my rants about needing to be left alone to write this rag. I humbly submit this work, hoping it may present something useful to those poor souls that may read it.

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<sup>1</sup>Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, (London: MacMillan & Co, 1865), 75-76. Readers should be aware that in the experience of writing the SAMS monograph, this conversation is not unlike many heard between student and professor up and down the wing of Muir Hall, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

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## INTRODUCTION

There is a frequently recurring struggle for existence, it follows that any being, if it vary however slightly in any manner profitable to itself, under the complex and sometimes varying conditions of life, will have a better chance of surviving, and thus be *naturally selected*.

– Charles Darwin<sup>1</sup>

In 2004, one year into his tenure as the 35<sup>th</sup> Chief of Staff of the United States Army (CSA), General Peter J. Schoomaker reflected on the organizational adaptation initiatives of the 1990s in relationship to the first years of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He stated, “I have thought for years that the Army needed to...change the way we develop leaders....transformation is not about equipment. It's about intellect; it's about judgment; it's about the development of leaders and soldiers. You've got to make that intellectual transformation before you can make the visible transformation.”<sup>2</sup> Organizational and operational adaptability are dependent, first and foremost, on developing the individual soldier. With the American soldier as its first priority, the Army can overcome the Darwinian challenge of evolving from its capstone concept to meeting the challenges of the future operational environment (FOE).

In September 2010, Dr. James G. Pierce, a retired U.S. Army Colonel with the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, quietly published a little known study on Army organizational culture. He investigated organizational culture in relationship to the professional development of future strategic leaders and the potential divergence between how Army leaders see themselves versus how they best survive in the FOE. Analyzing data from a sample of students attending the Army War College in 2003 and 2004, Dr.

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1860), 5, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/22764/22764-h/22764-h.htm> (accessed February 26, 2013).

<sup>2</sup>James Kitfield, “Army Chief struggles to transform Service during war,” *National Journal*, October 29, 2004, <http://www.govexec.com/federal-news/2004/10/army-chief-struggles-to-transform-service-during-war/17929/> (accessed November 20, 2012).

Pierce “postulate(d) that the ability of a professional organization to develop future leaders in a manner that perpetuates readiness to cope with future environmental and internal uncertainty depends on organizational culture.” This hypothesis was based on the assumption that organizational culture enables organizational adaptation; organizational culture perpetuates adaptability and promotes relevance and continued existence. Pierce’s conclusion is alarming. He finds that Army leadership “*may be inadequately prepared to lead the profession toward future success* (italics added).”<sup>3</sup>

In an effort to ensure future success and relevance, the Army, at the end of 2012, published its *Army Capstone Concept* (ACC). The ACC sets an azimuth into the future and lays a course for the Army as it moves towards the FOE. The pamphlet, nested with joint doctrine, serves as the foundational document of the Army’s conceptual framework and strategic approach to the FOE. It describes the anticipated FOE and the roles, responsibilities, and capabilities the Army, as part of the joint force, will be required to fulfill and provide in order to maintain a position of continuous advantage over potential adversaries. It outlines how the Army will allocate and manage its limited resources in order to achieve an evolution between the current state of the Army to a desired state; a vision of preventing conflict, shaping the environment, and winning the Nation’s wars.<sup>4</sup>

The ACC is based on a series of assumptions regarding future trends, constraints, restraints and the FOE. These assumptions are based on several variables such as global re-basing

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<sup>3</sup>James G. Pierce, *Is the Organizational Culture of the U.S. Army Congruent with the Professional Development of its Senior Level Officer Corps?* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2010), iii.

<sup>4</sup>Department of the Army, *Army Capstone Concept* (Fort Eustis, VA: Training and Doctrine Command, December, 19, 2012), 4–11. Of note, the ACC functions as a strategic level Army Design Methodology narrative. It describes the FOE, the problems and challenges the Army will encounter, and a strategic approach that serves as a roadmap to navigate future years and achieve desired endstates and outcomes.



initiatives; fiscal restraint; required assistance to joint, interagency, interdepartmental, and multinational communities for unified actions; contested operations in the cyber and space domains; and increased enemy anti-access and area denial capabilities. The Army's description of the FOE is one of persistent conflict and ever-increasing uncertainty, unpredictability, complexity and disorder! In a word, chaos.<sup>5</sup>

Describing this chaotic future, the National Intelligence Council's *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds* predicts a world challenged by continuous developments in human interaction. Adversaries in the FOE will include rising peer competitors; non-state, transnational terrorist and criminal organizations; super-empowered individuals; or networks and coalitions made up of a combination.<sup>6</sup> They will threaten and challenge U.S. security conventionally and unconventionally in every element of our national power: economically, diplomatically, militarily, and within the information domain. These hybrid threats will be diverse, dynamic and adaptive combinations of conventional, unconventional and criminal elements acting in full concert with unrestricted violence on unrestricted targets.<sup>7</sup> Given this foreboding description of

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds* (Washington, DC: Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 2012), <http://www.dni.gov/index.php/about/organization/global-trends-2030> (accessed February 12, 2013). Future challenges stem from the increasing speed of flow and access to information; technological innovation, advancement, availability, and proliferation; access to and spread of social media in global communications; increased competition for limited resources, such as energy, water, and food; increased struggle for wealth, sovereignty, and political power; demographic migrations and increasingly urban-centric populations; remote, ungovernable areas; inter- and intra-state tribal, religious, and cultural clashes; and increased interconnectedness and interdependence within a volatile global economy. Also see Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, and Thomas Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*. Both speak of future international conflicts based on a "class of civilizations," as well as on the periphery and within the "disconnected core," respectively.

<sup>7</sup>Department of the Army, *ADP 3-0, Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2011). ADP 3-0 defines a "hybrid threat" (to include hybrid warfare) as the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, criminal elements, or a combination of these forces and elements all unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects. They are ever adaptive,

the FOE, the ACC offers a solution for the Army to achieve its vision. In summary, the ACC advocates for an institutional and operating force consisting of organizations, leaders, soldiers, and civilians trained and educated, exhibiting and imbued with the principle of “operational adaptability.”<sup>8</sup>

According to the Combat Studies Institute (CSI), over the past 100 years, the Army attempted organizational adaptation 11 times, motivated by forecasted threats in the FOE, technological innovations, and fiscal austerity.<sup>9</sup> Organizational adaptation initiatives should be viewed as the Army attempting to correct its azimuth. As the current ACC suggests, periodic evolutions in Army organizational adaptation initiatives are recognized as imperative to the Army’s success, relevance and readiness. From the early 1990s until 2005, the Army researched, studied, developed, implemented, and continued to improve upon an organizational adaptation process known generally as “Army Transformation.” The process placed a premium on transforming the Army’s organizational structure, driven by revolutionary technological advances and capabilities that would change the character of how future wars would be waged. This organizational adaptation process languished, however, resulting in a force mentally unprepared

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using increased technological capabilities. Hybrid threats combine regular forces governed by international law, military tradition, and custom with unregulated irregular forces that act with no restrictions on violence or their targets. These forces could include militias, terrorists, guerillas, and criminals.

<sup>8</sup>Department of the Army, *Army Capstone Concept*, iii–11. For the past several decades, the Army’s doctrine consistently referenced the vital nature and essential element of “adaptability” both organizationally and operationally. A review of historical documents and Army Field Service Manuals, FM 100–5 and FM 3–0 (Operations), as well as FM 22–100 and FM 6–22 (Leadership), for the past 50 years, demonstrate and reference the imperative that doctrine, strategy, operations, tactics, organizations, and leaders must be flexible and adaptable in the face of fluid, changing environments, missions, requirements, and adversaries, as circumstances may require.

<sup>9</sup>Department of the Army, *Sixty Years of Reorganizing for Combat: A Historical Trends Analysis* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1999), <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cgsc/carl/download/csipubs/sixty.pdf> (accessed February 26, 2013).

for the challenges it faced following 9/11. Not until 2005, four years into the resulting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, did it finally result in what has been described as the largest Army organizational restructuring since World War II.<sup>10</sup>

Following the Gulf War and collapse of the Soviet Union, it was critical for the Army to change its organizational structure based on collective recognition that the FOE would be filled with uncertainty, complexity, and chaos; and that modern warfare was on the cusp of a revolution in military affairs with far- and wide-reaching consequences.<sup>11</sup> Although senior Army leadership throughout the 1990s believed adapting organizational structure to be imperative to the relevance of the Army and its ability to accomplish its mission, it would take the catastrophic, system-shocking events of 9/11, as well as the recall and appointment to CSA of a retired four-star general with an unconventional background, to truly be a catalyst and change-agent for the Army. General Peter Schoomaker brought the sense of urgency, political support, leadership, drive, and mandate for change necessary for bringing about a turning point in the Army's organizational adaptation process.

Schoomaker's tenure as CSA and events leading up to it provide a case study that demonstrates both successes and failures in organizational adaptation. It demonstrates desirable and undesirable traits in Army organizational practices, processes, and culture; as well as individual leadership traits that help and hinder innovation and adaptation. Finally, these lessons offer a road map and way ahead as the Army brings over a decade of war to a close and faces the

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<sup>10</sup>William Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War: Designing the Modular Force, 1991–2005* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 2007), iii. This seems to be an opinion expressed by the author; no analytical support for this statement is provided.

<sup>11</sup>“Revolution in Military Affairs” is defined by Williamson Murray and Allan Millet as a phenomenon characterized by a complex mix of tactical, organizational, doctrinal, and technological innovations in order to implement a new conceptual approach to warfare. Williamson Murray and Allan Millet, *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, 1–5. In this particular case, the RMA was based on the development of what was being referred to as the “Information Age.”

uncertain, unpredictable, complex, non-linear, and chaotic future.

The case study focuses specifically on the organizational adaptation of the Army from a division-centric warfighting organization to a modular, brigade-centric organization. It covers the decade leading up to Schoomaker's tenure as CSA; how he ultimately decided and implemented the final form and structure of transformation during his tenure; and how his decisions, made while the Army was at war, were all dynamics of his being the "change-agent" to the Army's culture and organization. More than just adapting organizational structure and how the Army fought, it was his emphasis and priority on transforming the soldier and Army culture that made for lasting change.

Following the case study, a comparison is drawn between the strategic-political-economic environment in which the Army found itself in the 1990s and the present (2013). Comparing selective similarities, such as public expectations and political calls for federal fiscal restraints and military down-sizing, and the problems and challenges posed by expectations in the FOE, provides Army senior leaders with of recommendations and lessons learned to set a new azimuth to the FOE and navigate challenges the Army faces now, as well as in the years and decades ahead.

In Pierce's study, Army War College students were asked to characterize the Army's *current* organizational culture. These students generally believed that the Army, as an institution, valued stability, caution and control; rigid formality, rules and policies; coordination and efficiency; short-term goal-setting and results-oriented performance; and hard-driving competitiveness. However, when these future strategic leaders were asked to characterize what the Army's organizational culture *should* be, in the context of the FOE, values they found to be imperative to success included flexibility and discretion, collaboration, innovation and creativity, risk-taking, long-term emphasis on professional growth and human resource development.

According to Pierce, this incongruence and disconnect is cause for concern.<sup>12</sup> If the Army is to continuously and relentlessly adapt to survive, to remain relevant and ready, and to win our nation's wars, requires an organizational culture that values and self-perpetuates organizational adaptation.

## ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL ADAPTATION

Following World War II, as American industry continued to grow and develop, business leaders sought to stay on the cutting edge, always one step ahead of the competition. Many principles used then and today, to understand burgeoning companies and the challenges they faced, came from renowned social psychologist Dr. Kurt Lewin at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Research Center for Group Dynamics and his ground-breaking research in social and organizational psychology in the 1950s. Dr. Lewin postulated that transformation is a continual process of planning, action, and results providing feedback for re-assessment, resulting in continuous organizational adaptation, competitiveness and improvement.<sup>13</sup>

In the context of the U.S. Army, study of organizational adaptation provides leaders with insight into how the Army can remain competitive, relevant and viable in the face of the FOE. For decades, Army doctrine consistently and routinely emphasized the importance of adaptability in the face of uncertainty, whether at the individual-tactical level, or the organizational-strategic level. The Army's "keystone warfighting manual" of the 1980s, *Field Manual 100-5, Operations*, clearly indicates that the Army's doctrine, organization, strategy, and tactics must be adapted to a

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<sup>12</sup>Pierce, *Organizational Culture of the U.S. Army*, iv.

<sup>13</sup>Kurt Lewin, *Group Decision and Social Change* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958), 201. Lewin's findings during the 1950s bear a striking resemblance to the Army's current Design Methodology. Key elements that enable organizational adaptation include understanding the environment, understanding the problem or challenge the organization faces, and constructing an approach to the problem. Once an approach is initiated, leaders and organizations must continuously re-assess the changing environment and adapt accordingly, in order to remain relevant.

fluid, global environment.<sup>14</sup> The Army's 1990s doctrine on leadership, *Field Manual 22–100, Army Leadership*, describes “the ability to adapt” in an ever-changing environment as an imperative that “will carry the day.”<sup>15</sup> The current *Army Capstone Concept*'s central theme relates directly to “adaptability,” calling it the fundamental characteristic required to decisively execute its core competencies and missions.<sup>16</sup>

Political scientist, Dr. Chad Serena, author of *A Revolution in Military Adaptation*, recently wrote, “As an organization, the Army adapts as events, circumstances, and organizational missions change and evolve. For any organization to...achieve mission success, it must adapt.” Serena added, “The Army's capacity to adapt to changing operational environments and adaptive threats is fundamental to achieving organizational success.... Regardless of the nature of the threat faced...the army will have to adapt.” However, for an organization such as the Army, a large, centralized, hierarchical government bureaucracy, organizational adaptation can be a cumbersome, exceedingly slow process. Serena's findings show that an organization's ability to adapt is directly proportional to its contact with the operating environment and the enemy. The closer an organization is to the enemy, the more adaptable it must be to survive. Conversely, the further removed an organization is from the operating environment, the more cumbersome it becomes and “slower the pace” of its ability to adapt.<sup>17</sup> So, while the Army may be adaptable at the tactical level, it is progressively less adaptable at the operational and strategic levels.

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<sup>14</sup>Department of the Army, *FM 100–5, Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1986), i.

<sup>15</sup>Department of the Army, *FM 22–100, Leadership* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1999), vii.

<sup>16</sup>Department of the Army, *Army Capstone Concept*, iii.

<sup>17</sup>Chad Serena, *A Revolution in Military Adaptation: The U.S. Army in the Iraq War* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 2–6, 161. Also see Eliot Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War*, (New York: Random House, 1990), 5–28.

Experts have found that successful organizational adaption is not an aspiration or endstate. Rather, as Lewin found in the 1950s, it is a continual requirement, a continual commitment to constant reappraisal and quest for understanding of a changing environment, changing threats, and changing international landscape. It involves constant, comprehensive internal auditing of core competencies, approaches to problem-solving, and key requirements, capabilities, and resource allocations required to lead and achieve successful change.<sup>18</sup> For the Army, in particular, it requires a vigilant and dedicated commitment to directing organizational inertia towards constant innovative evolutions in how the Army thinks, talks, writes, fights, equips, resources, organizes, trains, bases, houses, mans and deploys.<sup>19</sup>

According to Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*, *good* organizations with *good* leaders vigorously pursue the organizational mission and vision and hold to high performance standards. *Great* leaders and *great* organizations encompass and accomplish all that good organizations do and more. The difference is in the humility and professional will of the great organization. Rather than vesting ambition in self-interest and personal success, great leaders invest their ambitions and ego into the institution's success.<sup>20</sup> *Good* leaders focus foremost on creating an organizational vision and a procedural roadmap, followed by building and developing the team necessary to accomplish the mission. *Great* leaders focus foremost on building and investing in

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<sup>18</sup>Again, note the similarities between Lewin's findings and the elements of the Army Design Methodology.

<sup>19</sup>Geoffrey Moore, *Dealing with Darwin: How Great Companies Innovate at Every Phase of their Evolution* (New York: Penguin Group, 2005), xiv. Moore asserts that true organizational adaption is manifested in all major core competencies. Organizationally, this relates to the Army's DOTMLPF functions (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, and Facilities), a concept discussed in the monograph. It also relates to the Army's current operational core competencies of Combined Arms Maneuver and Wide Area Security, which both stress a foundational need for organizational and operational adaptability.

<sup>20</sup>Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 20–21.

the team, getting the right people in place, followed by creating a vision and a roadmap to success.<sup>21</sup> Harvard business consultant John Kotter subscribes to this “first who, then what” principle. In *Leading Change*, Kotter writes that in order to lead successful organizational change, a guiding team and coalition must first be established and built on mutual respect and trust. One of the top reasons for failure in organizational change is neglect in first building the team.<sup>22</sup>

In his book *The Fifth Discipline*, Dr. Peter Senge discussed the challenge of organizational adaptation in terms of failure. He determined that organizations fail to learn and adapt because culture and leadership put more emphasis on treating symptoms versus understanding and solving limiting factors and underlying problems. This causes organizations to perform inconsistently over time, leading to long-term drift towards ever-increasing challenges. Unsuccessful organizations focus on symptomatic versus fundamental issues and on short-term versus long-term metrics of success. They tend to have a culture of compliance, reward for pleasing superiors, and management by fear. They value uniformity of thought versus diversity and detailed planning in an effort to achieve predictability and controllability. Finally, they promote excessive competition in an effort to improve performance. Successful “learning” organizations and leaders, however, seek to understand past mistakes and cause-effect relationships. They patiently work to understand the process of change and the inter-relationships of organizational variables. This allows for better anticipation of challenges and successful adaptation in uncertain and complex environments.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, successful military organizational adaptation is dependent on the political-

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 47.

<sup>22</sup>John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 1996), 16–23.

<sup>23</sup>Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of Learning Organizations* (New York: Crown Business, 2006), xiv. Note the similarities between Senge’s description of organizations that fail to adapt with Pierce’s findings regarding Army War College students’ characterization of Army organizational culture.



economic environment in which it finds itself.<sup>24</sup> University of Michigan political scientist, Dr. John Kingdon, further explains this dynamic. He asserts that successful organizational change is dependent on the principle of “multiple streams.” Kingdon’s “multiple streams” model stipulates that change cannot be successfully implemented until a problem is first identified and understood; he describes this as the “problem stream.” The second element, the “policy stream,” is where solutions to problems are developed. When the “problem stream” converges with the “policy stream,” it would seem that the problem is solved. However, there is a missing element. In Kingdon’s model, the missing element is the “political stream,” described as the political climate and timing. Not until all streams converge together, can problems successfully be solved.<sup>25</sup>

For the political environment and timing to be conducive to successful organizational adaptation, a “change agent,” crisis event, and sense of overwhelming urgency must occur, providing a catalyst for change. As journalist Malcolm Gladwell describes it, the moment of critical mass or “tipping point” is reached; deliberate, recognizable organizational adaptation occurs.<sup>26</sup> Collins and Senge concur, adding the critical element of inspired leadership. In summary, successful organizational adaptation is a dynamic involving an urgent need, the right leader, having the right vision, understanding the political environment and fundamental, underlying problems, proposing workable solutions at the right time.

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<sup>24</sup>As Carl von Clausewitz discusses in *On War*, the reasons for war always stem from politics, writing “War, therefore, is an act of policy” and, “a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Eds. Peter Paret and Michael Howard, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 86–87.

<sup>25</sup>John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (New York: Pearson, 2010).

<sup>26</sup>Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (New York: Little, Brown & Co, 2000), 12.

## CHALLENGES TO ADAPTATION

In early 1991, the Army, having just experienced victory in the Gulf War, was still a Cold War-era force, focused on deterring and defeating the Soviet Union. By the end of 1991, however, the Soviet Union had collapsed as a political state. America's military power was no longer challenged by a peer competitor. The bipolar international system was no more. The United States was the world's sole, remaining super power.

President George H.W. Bush wrote in the preface of the 1990 U.S. National Security Strategy, "change in the international landscape was breath-taking in its character, dimension, and pace," requiring a strategic transformation that would be challenged by political turbulence, uncertainty, unknown sources of instability, and an "advance into historically uncharted waters."<sup>27</sup> As the Soviet Union crumbled and American triumphalism began to swell, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director, R. James Woolsey, warned, "We have slain a large dragon. But we live now in a jungle filled with a bewildering variety of poisonous snakes. And in many ways, the dragon was easier to keep track of."<sup>28</sup> U.S. military forces that had stood up to the Soviet Union and defeated Saddam Hussein's forces, were facing calls for dramatic draw down and increasingly restricted resources. There was a distinct danger that, nationally, the U.S. would suffer from debilitating triumph, or "victory disease," due to its growing arrogance, creeping

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<sup>27</sup>George H.W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, DC: The White House, 1990), 5. Also see Martin van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 2; and Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Summer (1993). Vaclav Havel, the last president of Czechoslovakia and first president of the Czech Republic, declared, "We are going through a transitional period, when it seems that something is on the way out and something else is painfully being born. It is as if something were crumbling, decaying, and exhausting itself, while something else, still indistinct, were arising from the rubble. Vaclav Havel, "Acceptance Speech," Presentation of The Liberty Medal by the National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, PA, July 4, 1994, [http://constitutioncenter.org/libertymedal/recipient\\_1994\\_speech.html](http://constitutioncenter.org/libertymedal/recipient_1994_speech.html) (accessed September 25, 2012)

<sup>28</sup>James Woolsey, "Testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence," Committee Hearing, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, February 2, 1993.

complacency and flexing an uncustomary unilateral national security policy.<sup>29</sup>

Americans wanted a “peace dividend” from all the defense investments of the Cold War.<sup>30</sup> In order to successfully prepare for a forecasted future of increased conflict, crisis, uncertainty and turmoil, the Army’s senior leadership generally agreed that it was imperative that the Army transform.<sup>31</sup> To transform, however, the Army faced three overarching challenges: organizational and bureaucratic culture; competing organizational, political and economic interests; and the uncertainty of the FOE.<sup>32</sup>

The ability of a military organization and its leadership to successfully and effectively adapt and cope with an uncertain future is directly related to organizational culture. Understanding organizational culture is crucial to understanding how an organization and its members function, perform, interact, behave, and make decisions.<sup>33</sup> Army culture is characterized by “an overarching desire for stability and control, formal rules and policies, coordination and efficiency, goal and results oriented, and hard-driving competitiveness,” valuing continuity of operations and standard operating procedures. This is incongruent with an anticipated FOE characterized by uncertainty, complexity, and chaos; and obstructive to fostering organizational adaptability. Whereas, a culture characterized by “flexibility, discretion... innovation, creativity,

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<sup>29</sup>Timothy Karcher, *Understanding the “Victory Disease” From the Little Bighorn to Mogadishu and Beyond* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004).

<sup>30</sup>Robert Davis, *The Challenge of Adaptation: The U.S. Army in the Aftermath of Conflict, 1953–2000* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 84.

<sup>31</sup>Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pam 525–5, Force XXI Operations: A Concept for the Evolution of Full-Dimensional Operations for the Strategic Army of the Early Twenty-First Century* (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1994), 1–2.

<sup>32</sup>Suzanne Nielsen, *An Army Transformed: The U.S. Army’s Post-Vietnam Recovery and the Dynamics of Change in Military Organizations* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2010), 5–35.

<sup>33</sup>Pierce, *Organizational Culture of the U.S. Army*, 1–5.

risk-taking, and a long-term commitment to professional growth” is decidedly more conducive to successful change and organizational adaptability.<sup>34</sup>

Colonel (Ret) Douglas Macgregor, Ph.D., author of *Breaking the Phalanx*, takes this critique further, indicting Army culture and processes as destructive elements. Macgregor charges that senior leaders, generally, tend to resist change and that the Army encourages the sycophant. “If you speak up and challenge the status quo, you’re dead,” he states. Mavericks are castigated, held back, and forced out; the true “talent of the Army naturally leaves.”<sup>35</sup> Others propose the Army, at senior ranks, is made up of careerists and promotion is dependent on demonstrated devotion to the service’s mission. Institutionally desired characteristics include caution, adherence to rules and regulations, and submission to authority.<sup>36</sup> Award-winning authors David Cloud and Greg Jaffe charge that the Army has an intellectually soft culture and does not truly tolerate officers with candor that are willing to engage superiors in intellectual debate.<sup>37</sup> According to Harvard political scientist Dr. Graham Allison, avoiding uncertainty, attempting to negotiate and control the environment, managing change versus leading change, and regularity are primary interests within military organizations.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Douglas Macgregor, interview by Todd Schmidt, Phone Interview, Washington, DC, January 23, 2013. Dr. Macgregor was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his contributions to the discourse on Army transformation, particularly his book *Breaking the Phalanx*. He was contacted via email and interviewed telephonically based on a desire to discuss Army Transformation and Brigade Modularity, topics and areas of study for which his intellectual contributions are well-recognized. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him. He recognizes that his views and opinions are, in his own words, “controversial and sometimes scathing.”

<sup>36</sup>Eliot Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War* (New York: Random House, 1990), 5–28.

<sup>37</sup>Greg Jaffe and David Cloud, *The Fourth Star: Four Generals and the Epic Struggle for the Future of the United States Army* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2010), 295.

<sup>38</sup>Graham Allison and Phillip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban*

Related to challenges of organizational culture is the challenge of competing organizational, political and economic interests. Within the Department of Defense (DoD), the Army competes with other military services for finite resources and funding. During the 1990s, this was particularly challenging. Military historians are in near unanimous agreement in the concept of the “peace dividend” expectation, in that interwar periods are a time of funding and resourcing constraints.<sup>39</sup> In a resource constrained environment, Dr. James Wilson, former Harvard Professor and author of *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, observes that an organization’s ability to adapt and implement change is also constrained. He notes that the military, as an agency of the government, must increasingly compete and lobby for political favor and support in order to secure funding and resources.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, Army leadership is faced with challenges of uncertainty in leading organizational adaptation. Leading change is difficult with a culture that values stability and control, when dealing with uncertainty in the future and uncertainty of the success in the very organizational adaptation targeted at dealing with forecasted futures. As Murray wrote, the Army “must innovate

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*Missile Crisis* (New York: Pearson, 1999), 168.

<sup>39</sup>Williamson Murray and Allan Millet, eds, *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 300. Specifically referring to this resource constrained political and economic environment of the 1990s, Murray writes that the U.S. Army was confronted with a future in which it would not receive anything similar to Cold War funding and resourcing, regardless of the expectation and forecasting of future change, challenge, and uncertain threats

<sup>40</sup>James Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 115–181. In *The Defense Game*, Dr. Richard Stubbing, former Duke Professor and twenty-year veteran of the Office of Management and Budget, observes that defense spending involves the effort of Army civilians and military officers building and nurturing political constituencies within the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), Congress, and the White House. Senior military leadership must build and gain favor with politicians through promotion of programs and facilities that benefit key states and congressional districts. Funds are dedicated to pet projects, and cannot be shifted, in times of austerity, to protect and ensure readiness, training, and modernization. Richard Stubbing and Richard Mendel, *The Defense Game: An Insider Explores the Astonishing Realities of America’s Defense Establishment* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), xii.

with less money and greater ambiguities about potential future opponents and the nature of wars” it will have to fight in the future. Add the political and economic dynamics of competing for limited resources during peacetime, when the Army is not fulfilling its primary purpose, and the challenge of uncertainty can cause anxiety in the minds of senior military leaders.<sup>41</sup>

As U.S. Military Academy Professor and Strategic Studies Institute Scholar, Dr. Suzanne Nielsen, wrote, the risks of leading the “wrong” organizational change, for military leaders, is uniquely high when innovation or adaptation may lead to future loss of soldiers’ lives.<sup>42</sup> This dynamic of contradictions in which the military’s organizational culture craves clarity, order and linearity, while preparing for a forecasted future of nonlinearity, chaos and complexity; seeking and pursuing political and economic interests and support, while not fulfilling primary missions and functions, were exactly what the Army faced in the decade of the 1990s.<sup>43</sup>

#### CASE STUDY – ARMY TRANSFORMATION, 1991–2005

Notable historians, authors, and critics wrote extensively on the Army’s military transformation efforts of the 1990s, particularly on organizational adaptation. These authors include Dr. Richard Stewart, General Editor of the official Army Historical Series, *American Military History*; Dr. William Donnelly, author of *Transforming an Army at War: Designing the Modular Force, 1991–2005*; Brigadier General (Ret) John Brown, PhD, author of *Kevlar Legions: The Transformation of the U.S. Army, 1989–2005*; Brigadier General (Ret) Huba Wass de Czege, founding Director of the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS); and Colonel (Ret) Douglas Macgregor, author of *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the*

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<sup>41</sup>Murray and Millett, *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, 300.

<sup>42</sup>Nielsen, *An Army Transformed*, 11–12.

<sup>43</sup>Alan Beyerchen, “Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Unpredictability of War,” *International Security* (Winter, 1992–1993), 87–88.

21<sup>st</sup> Century. Additionally, from 1990 to 2003, the Army produced over 55 major unclassified documents related to the organizational adaptation initiatives of Force XXI and Army Transformation. Finally, students at the Army War College and SAMS tackled related topics of organizational adaptation and change during nearly every cohort to pass through both prestigious schools.

Speaking at the Aspen Institute in August, 1990, President George H.W. Bush described the organizational adaptation the military faced, “what we need are not merely reductions, but restructuring.”<sup>44</sup> As Frederick Kagan wrote in *Finding the Target*, “Army leaders saw Desert Storm as...the last major ground conflict of its kind and rejected the idea of building future force structures to fight similar wars in the future.”<sup>45</sup> To this end, the Army attempted to adapt its organizational structure through several evolutionary initiatives. These initiatives include “Force XXI,” “Army After Next,” and “Army Transformation,” and were generally driven by five factors: lessons learned from recent conflict and combat operations; perceived organizational shortfalls; assessments of future threats and operational environments; technological and informational advancements; and prescribed changes based on political and fiscal environment.<sup>46</sup>

Army senior leadership understood that, following the Gulf War and Cold War, the Army faced budgetary cuts and force reductions. Indeed, Congress and DoD mandated budget cuts of 4

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<sup>44</sup>George H.W. Bush, “Remarks at the Aspen Institute,” Symposium at the Aspen Institute, Aspen, CO, August 2, 1990, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=18731> (accessed February 26, 2013).

<sup>45</sup>Frederick Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy* (New York: Encounter Books, 2006), 160.

<sup>46</sup>Murray, *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, 1. Murray specifically discusses innovation driven by technology, national defense spending, and technology’s improvement of command and control capabilities. Also see Department of the Army, *Sixty Years of Reorganizing for Combat* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute, 1999).

to 6 percent from 1991 to 1994.<sup>47</sup> The Joint Staff, under the leadership of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), General Colin Powell, advocated significant reductions of 11 to 17 percent in the size of the military in “The Base Force Study” and the “Bottom-Up Review.” The burden of these manpower reductions would fall disproportionately on the Army, resulting in a downsizing from 18 to 10 active-duty combat Divisions.<sup>48</sup>

Rather than being forward deployed and “threat-based” with a Soviet orientation, trained to conduct large-scale, high-intensity conflict, the Army would transition towards improved force projection capabilities, primarily based within the continental U.S. This required the service to develop a more expeditionary mindset with rapidly deployable, flexible, and tailorable force structures, fully and inherently capable of augmenting joint and combined warfighting requirements.<sup>49</sup> The future Army construct would be capable of conducting any assigned mission, from interagency, civil support and disaster relief operations to counter-insurgency and major combat operations.<sup>50</sup> The force of the future would, in theory, be less hierarchical, more flexible in its capability to undertake multiple types of missions, more technologically sophisticated than any peer competitor and, most importantly, inherently adaptable to the challenges and hybrid nature of future warfare.

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<sup>47</sup>Mark Sherry, *The Army Command Post and Defense Reshaping, 1987–1997* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 2008), 37–39.

<sup>48</sup>Lorna Jaffe, *The Development of the Base Force, 1989–1992* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint History Office, 1993), 11–15. Also see Mark Sherry, *The Army Command Post and Defense Reshaping, 1987–1997*, 87.

<sup>49</sup>James Yarrison, *The Modern Louisiana Maneuvers: Changing the Way We Change* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 1999), v; Richard Stewart, Ed., *American Military History, Vol II, The U.S. Army in a Global Era, 1917–2003* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 2005), 427–428; Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 5.

<sup>50</sup>William Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 3.



### General Sullivan and “Force XXI”

On June 21, 1991, General Gordon R. Sullivan was appointed the 32d U.S. Army Chief of Staff (CSA). Having previously served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans (DCSOPS) and Vice Chief of Staff (VCSA), Sullivan possessed a well-grounded understanding of the challenges the Army faced. He believed that the wider Army had grown complacent in its victory following the Gulf War. Additionally, he anticipated a window of opportunity; a period of relative international calm to affect organizational change in the Army, requiring rapid action. He possessed a strong sense of personal urgency, coupled with a vision for organizational adaptation and change.

Sullivan’s vision of change, he believed, would be generated through a contemporary version of the Louisiana Maneuvers (LAM).<sup>51</sup> LAM would be a catalyst to “change the way the Army changed itself,” as well as to completely overhaul Army force structure and doctrine to meet challenges of the coming decades. In Sullivan’s own words describing the LAM initiative, “I was fostering innovation and growth in extraordinary ways...I – not merely my staff – was going to be personally involved.”<sup>52</sup> He personally formulated a vision for change and mapped the direction he wanted to take. His secondary priority was to gain buy-in from senior Army leaders and a wider community of key stakeholders to create a guiding coalition to affect organizational adaptation in a deliberate, proactive approach.

The change he intended to lead, however, would be challenged by the very bureaucracy

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<sup>51</sup>According to Yarrison, *Modern Louisiana Maneuvers*, vi, Sullivan was a self-described avid reader and amateur historian, and had recently read, Dr. Christopher Gabel’s, *The U.S. Army GHQ Maneuvers of 1941*. Gabel provides an historical account of General George C. Marshall’s “Louisiana Maneuvers,” exercises and experiments in designing and testing new Army force structure and doctrine prior to WWII. According to Yarrison, Gabel’s book inspired Sullivan’s actions in regards to Army transformation.

<sup>52</sup>Gordon Sullivan and Michael Harper, *Hope Is Not a Method* (New York: Broadway Books, 1996), 169.

he led. Sullivan was skeptical and critical of the bureaucratic change processes and procedures the Army had put in place during the Cold War. As Center for Military History's Dr. James Yarrison, described, "Sullivan believed that they were too inflexible and deliberately slow to enable the Army both to make the changes it needed then and to react quickly and agilely to future requirements for change."<sup>53</sup>

Consulting with key Army leaders and stakeholders, Sullivan realized there were divergent opinions on how LAM initiatives should be pursued. General Fredrick Franks, Commander of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), with the mission of building the Army's future force and doctrine, firmly believed that LAM should be under his direction. LTG J.H. Binford Peay, III, the Army's DCSOPS, believed that LAM's mission fell into his scope of duties and responsibilities, as DCSOPS had been responsible for force development processes throughout the Cold War. Differing with both men, on March 9, 1992, Sullivan sent a message to the Army's senior leadership formally announcing his vision and plans to stand up the LAM Task Force under his personal direction.<sup>54</sup>

After two years of intensive studies, testing, simulations, experimentation, and analysis, the LAM Task Force had essentially fulfilled its purpose and charter, and, for all practical purposes, its mission had been absorbed by TRADOC. The Task Force remained in existence throughout Sullivan's tenure, but was utilized as an "increasingly personal instrument of the Chief of Staff."<sup>55</sup> The major concepts and ideas stemming from this executive effort were to be rebranded in early 1994 and called, "Force XXI."

On August 1, 1994, TRADOC released Pamphlet 525-5, *Force XXI Operations: A*

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<sup>53</sup>Yarrison, *Modern Louisiana Maneuvers*, vi.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 13-20.

<sup>55</sup>Yarrison, *Modern Louisiana Maneuvers*, 71.

*Concept for the Evolution of Full-Dimensional Operations for the Strategic Army of the Early Twenty-First Century*. The document was a “vision of the future,” providing the intellectual impetus and underpinnings for a period of transformation that would last for over a decade, would be shepherded by several of the Army’s most senior leaders, re-branded and called by multiple names. General William Hartzog, the newly appointed Commanding General of TRADOC, informed readers, “We have crossed the threshold into a new strategic era while simultaneously entering a new age, the Information Age.”<sup>56</sup>

Department of Defense leadership and intellectuals, particularly within the Army, believed the world was undergoing a revolution in military affairs at this time. As TRADOC described it, innovations in information and weapons technology, and forecasted future technology and capabilities that would be integrated into the military, would give birth to the “Information Age” and revolutionize military equipping, manning, training, doctrine and organization.<sup>57</sup> Brigadier General Huba Wass de Czege became involved with the organizational experimentation initiative following his retirement from active duty. Wass de Czege believed that revolutionary information technology would increase span of control for smaller, more lethal organizations, allowing the elimination of one or more layers of command. The “echelon of maneuver,” as he termed it, would be roughly half the size of a traditional division, yet “significantly more capable.” It would become the new building block organization or

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<sup>56</sup>Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pam 525–5, Force XXI Operations: A Concept for the Evolution of Full-Dimensional Operations for the Strategic Army of the Early Twenty-First Century* (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1994). Hartzog’s introductory comments. The elements of instability outlined in the 1994 *Force XXI Operations* pamphlet bear a striking resemblance to the description of the FOE as outlined in the current Army Capstone Concept.

<sup>57</sup>Mark Sherry, *The Army Command Post and Defense Reshaping, 1987–1997*, 119; *TRADOC Pam 525–5*, 2–7. Douglas Macgregor, *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (West Port, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1997), 31.

“organism” by which the Army of the future would fight.<sup>58</sup>

Colonel (Ret) Douglas Macgregor, Ph.D., working as a Fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, believed that, because of down-sizing, the Army needed an adaptable, flexible warfighting structure that could conduct full spectrum combat operations, from high-intensity conflict to operations other than war.<sup>59</sup> Macgregor’s research, running concurrently with TRADOC’s experimentations, theorized that increased lethality required greater dispersion on the battlefield. Greater dispersion of forces required greater capability to command, control and sustain these formations. As both TRADOC and Macgregor found, future technologies would enable a brigade-sized echelon of maneuver that was more flexible, adaptable, and lethal than the Army’s current construct, tailorable to any mission.<sup>60</sup>

As Sullivan understood, and successors soon realized, organizational change and adaptation, particularly in governmental bureaucracies, such as the Army, are incremental, mechanistic, and orderly. They result in a “tinkering around the edges” versus profound, revolutionary change required to ensure innovation, relevancy and competitiveness. The challenge the Army faced was the need to collectively and rapidly decide and move towards organizational adaptation that would meet the challenges of the FOE. Once a decision was made to change, it needed to commence rapidly “to create definitive separation” from the current status

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<sup>58</sup>Huba Wass de Czege, “Optimizing Future Battle Command Technologies,” *Military Review* (March/April 1998), 15–21.

<sup>59</sup>Macgregor, *Breaking the Phalanx*, 52.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 5–89. Macgregor states, “The division’s size seems at variance with warfare’s trends...a large warfighting formation like a division could significantly constrain contingency planning and response options. What the Army needs is a warfighting organization with a form that parallels the shift of warfighting functions and activities to progressively lower levels. One way to modify the division organization is to disestablish divisions as standing organizations....Brigade task forces would continue to wear division patches and would maintain their traditional links to parent divisions. Structuring these brigades to operate more or less independently to ensure their deployability....Assign brigades those elements which are routinely cross-attached for deployment to combat or training to ensure their smooth cooperation in war.”

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Critics of Sullivan's initiatives target the rational for change and the form transformation was taking. They submit that the entire process was a "general floundering around for a new definition of strategic objectives, rather than in response to any specific events...having more to do with job protection than strategic analysis."<sup>62</sup> According to Macgregor, the status quo and job security were exactly what senior leaders were trying to protect. "Post 1991 force reductions mirrored the past reductions following World War I and World War II," he stated, characterizing transformation under Sullivan as a farce, as a "Potemkin Village – trying, with great effort, to look like we were really changing."<sup>63</sup>

#### General Reimer and the "Army After Next"

On June 20, 1995, General Dennis Reimer succeeded Sullivan as CSA. Under Sullivan, Reimer had served as DCSOPS and VCSA. Under Reimer, the LAM Task Force, lacking sponsorship and a clear mission, languished for another year before officially dissolving on July 1, 1996.<sup>64</sup> The Force XXI organizational adaptation campaign would continue through Reimer's own organizational adaptation initiative, however, it was re-branded as "Army After Next." The "Army After Next" initiative was spearheaded by TRADOC and focused on force structure and organizational experimentation.<sup>65</sup> Rather than building the Army around a division-centric

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<sup>61</sup>Macgregor, *Breaking the Phalanx*, 33. Also see Douglas Kiel, *Managing Chaos and Complexity in Government: A New Paradigm for Managing Change, Innovation, and Organizational Renewal* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994), 14, and Moore, *Dealing with Darwin*, xv.

<sup>62</sup>Lawrence Freedman, "Escalators and quagmires: Expectations and the Use of Force," *International Affairs*, Vol 67, No 1 (January 1991), 16.

<sup>63</sup>Macgregor, Phone Interview, January 23, 2013.

<sup>64</sup>Yarrison, *Modern Louisiana Maneuvers*, 83.

<sup>65</sup>Department of the Army, *Army After Next: A Vision for the Future* (Fort Belvoir, VA:

construct, TRADOC staff and defense intellectuals were beginning to consider a different approach. To test this new approach, Reimer created a brigade-sized, interim test force around a wheeled-vehicle weapons platform, the “Stryker.”<sup>66</sup> As Reimer’s tenure came to a close and a new CSA was preparing to come on board, the idea of a brigade-centric construct was gaining support.

### General Shinseki and “Army Transformation”

On June 22, 1999, General Eric Shinseki became the 34<sup>th</sup> CSA. Just as Sullivan and Reimer before him, Shinseki had previously served as DCSOPS and VCSA. From the beginning, he made “Army Transformation” his top priority. Two days prior to Shinseki’s swearing in as the CSA, official combat operations came to an end between North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces and Yugoslavia in Operation Allied Force. During Operation Allied Force, the Army was called to deploy a battalion of Apache attack helicopters as a component of Task Force Hawk.<sup>67</sup> The significant challenges the Army encountered in supporting the deployment of Task Force Hawk were such that the House Armed Services Committee asked the General Accounting Office to investigate. The findings were clear. For all the theoretical work to affect organizational adaptation that occurred in the 1990s, the Army, in 1999, was still a remnant of the Cold War.<sup>68</sup>

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Department of the Army, Research, Development and Acquisition, 1998), 2.

<sup>66</sup>Stuart Johnson, John Peters, Karin Kitchens, Aaron Martin, and Jordan Fischbach, *A Review of the Army’s Modular Force Structure* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2012), 10.

<sup>67</sup>Government Accountability Office, *GAO-01-401, Kosovo Air Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2001), 1–3. The purpose of the Apache helicopters and Task Force Hawk was to conduct deep strikes against Serbian forces in Kosovo as a part of a larger air campaign.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, 3–4. Investigations into the lessons learned from the Task Force Hawk deployment found issues for improvement in five broad areas: Army doctrine must better support joint service operations; vast improvements in command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence were needed; unit and individual training must be updated to reflect the

Referring to current Army units as a “Legacy Force,” Shinseki’s tenure focused on experimenting with an “Interim Force,” while rapidly developing the “Objective Force” of the future. The Interim Force would be a highly lethal, highly mobile brigade-sized combat team that would serve as a prototype for testing conceptual organizational structure, doctrine, equipping, training, and manning.<sup>69</sup> During this time, in an effort to change how the Army thought about organizational structure, he created an ad hoc organization, the Objective Force Task Force (OFTF), similar to the LAM Task Force, under the leadership of a three-star general reporting directly to him, to again begin studying transformation.<sup>70</sup>

Simultaneously, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was directed by Congress to submit the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), due no later than September 30, 2001. After taking his cabinet posting, Rumsfeld’s relationship with Shinseki soon soured.<sup>71</sup> He had been critical of the Army for moving too slowly in transforming over the past decade, calling for changes in how U.S. military organizations were structured. Rather than building and equipping military organizations based on perceived threats the nation may face, such as the Soviet Union in

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requirements of the FOE and joint operations; the Army had significant capability shortfalls that impeded its deployment and performance requirements; and, lastly, the Army required significant force structure changes, if it were to remain relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

<sup>69</sup>Mark Reardon and Jeffery Charlston, *From Transformation to Combat: The First Stryker Brigade at War* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 2007), 3–8.

<sup>70</sup>Michael Shaler, Interviewed by Todd Schmidt, Phone Interview, Steamboat Springs, CO, January 29, 2013. Colonel (Ret) Michael Shaler was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his extensive involvement, experience and contributions to the discourse on Army transformation. He served as Executive Officer to the G3 from 1989–1991, taught organizational leadership at SAMS from 2001–2005, and advised the senior executive leadership of the Army from 2003–2011. He was contacted via email and interviewed telephonically based on a desire to discuss Schoomaker’s tenure as the CSA, Army Transformation and Brigade Modularity, topics and areas of study for which his leadership, practical and intellectual contributions are well-recognized. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him.

<sup>71</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013.

the Cold War, Rumsfeld directed the military to design forces that were more joint in nature, expeditionary, rapidly deployable, regionally tailored and based on the capabilities future adversaries may employ against the U.S.<sup>72</sup>

On September 11, 2001, the time for conceptualizing, theorizing, experimenting and adapting during a relative interlude of international peace ran out. The Army was soon fighting on two major fronts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Shinseki had moved Army Transformation efforts forward, but transforming the Army, while at war, would be a huge undertaking. Organizational adaptation would be met with significant challenges in the weeks, months and years ahead.

On February 25, 2003, Shinseki testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), providing his best military advice on post-war Iraq man-power requirements for long-term stability operations. Responding that the requirement would possibly be several hundred thousand troops, his unintentionally politically-charged comments were immediately derided and described as “wildly off the mark.”<sup>73</sup> In what seemed to be an intentional insult, Shinseki’s replacement was soon announced. On June 11, 2003, Shinseki retired. In the context of a politically-charged war and presidential politics, the perception that he had been fired was a prevalent narrative in the news and many Washington, DC, social circles. However, Shinseki had announced his retirement over a year prior, as reported by the *Washington Times* on April 19, 2002. Having reached the pinnacle position of the Army, Shinseki retired from active duty on his

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<sup>72</sup>Donald Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2001), 13–20. These goals were similar to those goals outlined by TRADOC in 1994. As his Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, later described to Congress, “our overall goal is to encourage a series of transformations that in combination can produce a revolutionary increase in our military capability and redefine how war is fought.” Paul Wolfowitz, “Testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee,” Congressional Testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, April 9, 2002.

<sup>73</sup>Eric Schmitt, “Threats and Responses: Military Spending; Pentagon Contradicts General On Iraq Occupation Force’s Size,” *New York Times*, February 28, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/28/us/threats-responses-military-spending-pentagon-contradicts-general-iraq-occupation.html>, (accessed October 25, 2012).



own volition, as he had previously planned.<sup>74</sup>

### General Schoomaker and “Brigade Modularity”

General Peter J. Schoomaker followed Shinseki, becoming the 35<sup>th</sup> Army Chief of Staff on August 1, 2003. He was the first retired four-star general to ever be recalled to active duty to serve as the CSA. Schoomaker’s background was significantly different from his predecessors. Prior to becoming the CSA, Schoomaker served in multiple command and staff positions within the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment and the special operations community. He commanded twice at the Squadron level within the Army’s 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Operational Detachment – Delta, and as the Operations Officer (J–3) within Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). Subsequent assignments included Commander of 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Operational Detachment – Delta, Commander of JSOC, Commander of U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), and Commander of Special Operations Command (SOCOM).<sup>75</sup> The majority of his career revolved around unconventional warfare and special operations forces, a community of warriors dedicated to a creed requiring that they “serve quietly, not seeking recognition or accolades.”<sup>76</sup>

Driving his pick-up truck through Texas, Schoomaker received a call from Rumsfeld’s office. Schoomaker had established a healthy relationship with Rumsfeld in the past, as the two men had worked together in retirement, had much in common, and agreed on how the Army must

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<sup>74</sup> Dave Pierre, “AP Fact Check: General Shinseki 'Forced Into Retirement' by Bush Administration,” December 7, 2008, <http://newsbusters.org/blogs/dave-pierre/2008/12/07/ap-fact-check-gen-shinseki-forced-retirement-bush-administration> (accessed March 7, 2013).

<sup>75</sup> General Officer Management Office, “General Peter J. Schoomaker Official Resume,” <https://www.gomo.army.mil>, (accessed February 26, 2013).

<sup>76</sup> U.S. Army Special Forces Command, “Official Website,” <http://www.soc.mil/>, (accessed February 26, 2013). Notice the similarity between the principles espoused in this creed to the characteristics of great leaders that Jim Collins proposes in *Good to Great*.

transform.<sup>77</sup> Rumsfeld offered the Army's top job to Schoomaker, stating that he was, "the right man to lead the United States Army as it continues its transformation into a force that will provide 21<sup>st</sup> century capability to the challenges we face."<sup>78</sup> With an Army at war in both Iraq and Afghanistan, 17 brigade combat teams (BCT) deployed worldwide, and a host of additional intense demands and pressures on the Army, Schoomaker was "reluctant to come back."<sup>79</sup>

From Schoomaker's perspective, the Army faced an immense task, "similar to the situation George Marshall faced at the beginning of World War II," in that he would be responsible for "creating an industrial process" that "systematized" how the Army provided "relevant and ready land power capability to combatant commanders and the joint team." Additionally, from the start, Schoomaker believed, contrary to senior DoD leadership, that the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan would "last a lot longer than folks expected."<sup>80</sup> The challenge would be to increase and improve the Army's warfighting capability, but to also improve the Army's ability to provide a sustainable rotation of forces to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He came to the job willing to walk away, bringing only what he needed in his truck, keeping it "combat parked in the Pentagon, ready to drive away," if senior DoD leadership would not

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<sup>77</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013.

<sup>78</sup>Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Public Affairs, Defense News Release, <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=5572> (accessed November 27, 2012).

<sup>79</sup>Peter J. Schoomaker, Interviewed by Todd Schmidt, Phone Interview, Tampa, FL, January 12, 2013. General (Ret) Peter J. Schoomaker was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his extensive leadership, involvement, experience and contributions to Army transformation as the CSA. He was contacted via email and interviewed telephonically based on a desire to discuss his tenure as the CSA, Army Transformation and Brigade Modularity, topics and areas of study for which his leadership, practical and intellectual contributions were essential and fundamental. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him.

<sup>80</sup>Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013.

support him.<sup>81</sup>

Schoomaker had already had a successful career. To him, this was not about personal ambition or ego. It was about doing what was right for the Army, focusing on the organization and the individual soldier above all else.<sup>82</sup> Asked why he accepted the position, he stated, “The simple answer is, because the nation is at war. Did I want to take this job? No, I did not want it. But I had committed my life to the Army. My father served in the Army for over three decades. My brother is in the Army. My daughter is going into the Army. In my family, when your nation asks you to do something, that's what we do.” Schoomaker, describing the importance and gravity of the decisions he faced in 2003, outlined issues that “in more normal times, you might make once in a decade.”<sup>83</sup>

Schoomaker's first priority would be to rebuild and re-energize the Army team from the ground up, focusing intently on the individual soldier and indoctrinating the entire force with a warrior ethos. He knew the importance of building a cohesive team with a common ethos and noble undertaking. He had been a starting football player for the University of Wyoming, playing on a championship winning team, and inducted into the university's Hall of Fame. In Schoomaker's mind, for any transformation to be successful, he first had to change, transform, and adapt the way the Army, specifically the individual soldier, operated, acted, and thought about themselves. They were to be warriors first.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013.

<sup>82</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013.

<sup>83</sup>Kitfield, “Army Chief struggles to transform Service.”

<sup>84</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013. According to Shaler, Schoomaker considered the indoctrination of a warrior ethos, more so than the transformation of the Army, as his most important effort. Upon retirement as the CSA, Schoomaker was recognized in Senate Resolution 139 (110<sup>th</sup> Congress) for what he considered to be both his greatest achievement and most important legacy – instilling a warrior ethos. Note again the similarities between Schoomaker's approach to “building the team” first, versus that of predecessors.

His second major decision as the CSA was to direct the Army's conversion to a modular, brigade-based force, while at war. Previous Army senior leaders believed transforming the Army, while at war, would be too much, too soon, and too hard to do. Talking with his DCSOPS, Lieutenant General Richard Cody, Schoomaker placed his hand on Cody's shoulder and directed, "Dick, we are going to transform while we fight this war. It will have huge implications, but it will set the tone for everything we do."<sup>85</sup> Modularity, according to Schoomaker, was only a single initiative among 15 focus areas he identified as requiring organizational adaptation in the face of a looming FOE.<sup>86</sup>

According to Colonel (Ret) Michael Shaler, one of Schoomaker's closest, personal confidantes and advisors, "Prior to becoming the Chief, Schoomaker knew in his heart that we were in a counter-insurgency and that we were in for a long war ahead."<sup>87</sup> In his opinion, as CSA, he was unable, in 2003, to coherently articulate, explain, and communicate to the National Command Authority and Congress the resources the Army required to sustain a combat ready force in the field. Facing a long war, requiring global engagement in the longer, strategic term, Schoomaker saw the challenge in terms of the ability to sustain combat power in an era of persistent conflict.<sup>88</sup>

The President, for political reasons, wanted the war to be fought, predominantly, by the

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<sup>85</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013.

<sup>86</sup>Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013. According to both Schoomaker and Shaler, these focus areas were interdependent, but intentionally distinct in how they were pursued. This strategy in policy implementation was pursued to make the comprehensive effort "digestible by the Army's bureaucracy."

<sup>87</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013. On July 21, 2004, in a statement to the House Armed Services Committee, Schoomaker outlined his views for the public record, stating, "this war will be a protracted one...now, our default expectation must be conflict...a foreseeable future of extended conflict in which we can expect to fight every day, and in which real peace will be an anomaly."

<sup>88</sup>Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013.

Active Component of the Army, with as little impact to the Reserve Component as possible. This was unsustainable, in Schoomaker's opinion, and would break the all-volunteer force. The Army required a "comprehensive strategy that made it easier to communicate costs and readiness to Congress," he stated. Schoomaker had to balance the war strategy with available resources, and, to do this, he had to have an "unassailable way of communicating the costs" of the war, exclaiming, "Ends, ways, and means must be balanced. Supply of forces must be able to meet the demands of strategy. There must be balance. Where there is no balance, strategic leaders must weigh and accept risk. They cannot gamble." With the Cold War-era, division-centric organizational structure that he inherited, Schoomaker felt that ends, ways and means were out of balance. Supply of forces would not be able to meet demand and demand signals were growing. Finally, it was impossible to clearly communicate the costs of sustaining the force.<sup>89</sup>

Outlining and advocating his plan for brigade modularity in testimony before Congress, Schoomaker explained, "We can significantly improve our tailorability, scalability, and 'fightability' of the Army's contribution to the overall joint fight...Tailoring and task-organizing our current force structure for such operations renders an ad hoc deployed force and a non-deployed residue of partially disassembled units, diminishing the effectiveness of both...its extraordinarily inefficient."<sup>90</sup> Reflecting years later, his opinion is unchanged, stated, "The old system didn't work! It resulted in a hodge-podge collection of soldiers and units with unprepared leadership and untrained soldiers. It created liabilities on the battlefield, and I was determined that, on my watch, there would be no more Jessica Lynch stories."<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013.

<sup>90</sup>Peter Schoomaker, "Prepared Statement before the House Armed Services Committee," Testimony to the House Armed Services Committee, July 21, 2004, [http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/security/has203000.000/has203000\\_of.htm](http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/security/has203000.000/has203000_of.htm) (accessed February 8, 2012).

<sup>91</sup> Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013. PFC Jessica Lynch was serving in

To Schoomaker, the challenge was clear. The previous decade's work, study, analysis, simulations and exercises to formulate how the Army must organizationally adapt for the 21<sup>st</sup> century produced an extensive body of work, but had not brought about lasting change. The Army's collective institutional and warfighting structures, bureaucratic systems and weapons platforms, organizational culture and leadership were still clinging to a linear Cold-War construct.

Schoomaker's perception was shared by Rumsfeld. Schoomaker and Rumsfeld both believed organizational adaptation and transformation were absolutely essential.<sup>92</sup> Schoomaker believed, however, that to be truly successful, the leadership, training, and culture of the Army had to be changed first. Schoomaker envisioned the driving force of Army organizational adaptation and transformation to be sophisticated, adaptive "pentathletes" serving in "an adaptive organization full of problem solvers. We want them to know how to think, not just what to think."<sup>93</sup>

One of Schoomaker's staff officers was Lieutenant General David Melcher. A graduate of West Point, Melcher received an MBA from Harvard and had served as a White House Fellow. During Schoomaker's tenure, Melcher served as the Director of Program Analysis and Evaluation (PAED) and later Assistant Chief of Staff, G-8. Melcher describes Schoomaker's transition to CSA as a very deliberate process. However, in Schoomaker's mind, he knew "we had to break

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Iraq during the initial invasion. Her unit, the 507<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company, was ambushed and Lynch was injured and captured. She was subsequently rescued by U.S. Special Operations Forces.

<sup>92</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013. According to Shaler, Rumsfeld was dissatisfied with the Army's rate of change and organizational adaptation in preparing for a future strategic and operational environment requiring lighter, more mobile, joint, expeditionary forces.

<sup>93</sup>Barbara Starr, "Battle of the Generals continues with article defending Rumsfeld: Four retired Generals fire back at critics of Defense Secretary," CNN, April 17, 2006, <http://www.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/04/17/rumsfeld/index.html> (accessed November 20, 2012).

the china and upset the Army bureaucracy.”<sup>94</sup>

To lead modularity, Schoomaker took four deliberate steps. First, he consulted with a consortium of key stakeholders, including defense industry senior executives, senior Joint Staff and OSD representatives, and senior Army leaders and civilians, including branch chiefs, as well as both active-duty and retired general officers. He wanted to understand their interests, concerns, and equities in the future of the Army, as well as incorporate their input and counsel. Secondly, he consulted and incorporated the major Army commands (ACOMs), as well as the Army Staff (ARSTAFF), in developing top priorities requiring his immediate attention, directing and empowering the ACOMs to carry out execution of those priorities inherently within their core competencies.<sup>95</sup> Thirdly, he disestablished Shinseki’s OUTF, signaling to Army Staff (ARSTAFF) and TRADOC that transformation would be their responsibility. It would not be spearheaded by a personal ad hoc organization, working outside the bounds of the Institutional Army. Finally, to energize the process, he called the future commander of the 3rd Infantry Division (ID), Major General William Webster, and said, “Let’s meet for dinner.”<sup>96</sup>

Over dinner, Schoomaker laid out his task to Webster. According to Webster, Schoomaker confided that, “We don’t have enough combat troops. We don’t have enough BCTs. We don’t have the capacity to conduct sustained combat operations.” He gave Webster specific

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<sup>94</sup>Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013.

<sup>95</sup>David Melcher, Interviewed by Todd Schmidt, Email Interview, McLean, VA, August 28, 2012. Lieutenant General (Ret) David Melcher was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his extensive leadership, involvement, experience and contributions to Army transformation while serving as the Director, PA&E, G8, and Military Deputy, Financial Management & Comptroller, under the tenures of Schoomaker and General George Casey, Schoomaker’s successor. He was contacted and interviewed via email based on a desire to discuss his tenure in the aforementioned positions as it related to Army Transformation and Brigade Modularity. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him.

<sup>96</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013.

guidance. First, he directed Webster to reform his Division and attempt to reorganize his formation to create five BCTs from the existing three BCTs. Secondly, he directed Webster to let him know what additional resources he required, if any, but to attempt to transform using only the soldiers, equipment, and resources he had available. Thirdly, he specified that Webster's transformed organization must be trained and ready to deploy to either the Central Command' area of responsibility to conduct counter-insurgency and stability operations and it must also be trained and ready to deploy to Korea to conduct high-intensity major combat operations. Finally, in the initial stages of Webster's efforts, Schoomaker directed Webster not to talk to his primary resource providers, namely the ARSTAFF and TRADOC, a directive that Webster found notable. On September 23, 2003, energized by Schoomaker's guidance, Webster assumed command of 3<sup>rd</sup> ID and set about accomplishing the CSA's directives.<sup>97</sup>

Meanwhile, TRADOC and ARSTAFF were hard at work, as well. Schoomaker had given them specific guidance to support 3<sup>rd</sup> ID's initiative, but not to influence or obstruct Webster's efforts.<sup>98</sup> TRADOC immediately developed five immediate focus areas specific to modularity. First, TRADOC committed to Schoomaker's initiative to improve the Army's warrior ethos through leadership development and education. If Schoomaker was going to drive the Army towards significant organizational adaptation initiatives, he wanted TRADOC to assist in developing future generations of Army leaders. Building a deep bench of upcoming leaders

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<sup>97</sup>William Webster, Interviewed by Todd Schmidt, Phone Interview, Washington, DC, January 17, 2013. Lieutenant General (Ret) William Webster was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his extensive leadership, involvement, experience and contributions to Army transformation as the Division Commanding General (CG) of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (ID). He was contacted via email and interviewed telephonically based on a desire to discuss his tenure as the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID CG, tasked with creating the first modular brigades under Schoomaker's leadership and direction. Webster's practical and intellectual contributions to Army Transformation and Brigade Modularity were essential and fundamental. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him.

<sup>98</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013.



would ensure transformation initiatives were indoctrinated, instilled and implanted in the Army for the long term. Second, TRADOC developed and improved the Army's public diplomacy and outreach programs to begin educating and informing key constituencies and stakeholders within DoD, Congress, and the White House, of the changes the Army was soon to take, and work to ensure their approval, buy-in, support, and advocacy. Third, he wanted to change the way Army units were manned, equipped, trained and deployed in support of operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and future conflicts. The Army needed to develop an improved construct for providing trained and ready forces that could better meet the demand of national security requirements, as well as communicating requirements and costs of those demands. Fourth, Schoomaker intended to change, improve, and, in some cases, reverse the post-Vietnam policies directing the array of units and forces within the Army's Reserve Component. Finally, the keystone focus area would be the development and fielding of a standardized, modular brigade-based force.<sup>99</sup>

The decision to develop a standardized, modular brigade-based force may have seemed a natural conclusion. However, until Schoomaker's tenure, the decision was not so clear. Senior Army civilian and uniformed leadership understood that they wanted to eliminate or combine layers of command structure, without losing combat power and effectiveness. They understood that "Units of Action" would take the form of either maneuver or support, with the maneuver units having inherent combined arms capabilities. They understood that "Units of Employment" would have the combined, historic capabilities of divisions, corps and armies, responsible for integrating forces into a joint task force or multi-national campaign, as well as incorporating and interacting with non-military international and domestic, governmental and non-governmental

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<sup>99</sup>Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 20. Lieutenant General (Ret) David Melcher also provided information on this process, describing the analysis and modeling behind these decisions provided extensively by the TRADOC staff, Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, as well as by Program Analysis & Evaluation (PA&E), under his leadership, as Director.

agencies. Regardless, the collective work on transformation up until this point was purely conceptual.<sup>100</sup> No clear directive to execute a deliberate transformation of U.S. Army forces had been given, funded or approved. Indeed, the political-fiscal environment in 2003 was not yet ripe for the transformational “brigade modularity” initiative to be fully launched.

In early September, 2003, Schoomaker approved TRADOC’s five key focus areas. Correspondingly, TRADOC established related task forces.<sup>101</sup> Task Force Modularity was made up of key stakeholders in TRADOC, additional agencies across the Army, and representatives from each sister service. The Task Force “Lead” was Major General Robert Mixon and he was given specific guidance from the CSA. “Convert the Army from its current corps and division structures to modular, brigade-based organizations combined with flexible headquarters,” the CSA directed. Schoomaker wanted readily implemented unit designs, and these designs were to “be as capable as current units; be easier to deploy compared to current units; and allow the Army to build additional maneuver brigades within the current Army end strength.”<sup>102</sup> Mixon added two additional constraints to the CSA’s requirements. “The units they designed had to be able to fill any mission the force might receive, and they could make use of only equipment and technology either currently in the Army’s inventory, commercially available, or soon to be added.”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>Ibid., 13–17.

<sup>101</sup>Jeffrey Witsken, et. al., *Modular Redesign of the Army: TRADOC Analysis Center and Task Force Modularity* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: TRADOC Analysis Center, 2005), 1.

<sup>102</sup>Jeffrey Witsken, Interviewed by Todd Schmidt, Personal Interview, Fort Leavenworth, KS, December 7, 2012. Colonel (Ret) Jeffrey Witsken was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his extensive research, analysis and involvement with Army transformation as a key analyst and team member of TRADOC Task Force Modularity. He was contacted via email and interviewed personally based on a desire to discuss his tenure as a member of TRADOC Task Force Modularity. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him. Shaler’s account reinforces Witsken’s notes regarding Schoomaker’s guidance.

<sup>103</sup>Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 38.

Colonel (Ret) Jeffrey Witsken, a participating planner at TRADOC during this time, concurs with Schoomaker's assessment of the Army, stating, "Schoomaker inherited a top heavy force, challenging his ability to fulfill his *Title 10* responsibility of manning and mobilizing the Army for war. Schoomaker compared the Army's manning model to a rain barrel with the spigot at the top, rather than at the bottom, making inefficient use of the Army's manpower and denying it combat power needed to mobilize and fight in extended conflict."<sup>104</sup> Moving the spigot to the bottom of the "force availability" barrel, the number of combat troops would increase and the number of BCTs could grow without increasing the Army's end-strength.

Schoomaker's intent was to increase the number of BCTs from 33 to 48, push combat power from the division to the brigade level, and increase the span of control, lethality, and flexibility of the BCT.<sup>105</sup> The Army was at war in two theaters and the sense of urgency for rapid action was clear. According to Witsken, "Schoomaker demanded a quick turnaround, three months, requiring the task force to leverage existing transformation work over the past decade. He accepted risk in the near-term, assuming that the modularity, in practice, would develop, be refined and improve over time, based on continuous feedback and analysis."<sup>106</sup> His logic, assumptions and willingness to accept risk were based on six fundamental reasons.

First, the Army already relied on BCT rotations, rather than individual replacements, when planning force requirements and unit deployments. Secondly, division-level commanders were already tailoring brigades based on the tactical and operational challenges they faced in Iraq and Afghanistan. Force tailoring, at the division level, was inefficient, however, leaving supporting battalions and smaller sized units combat ineffective. Thirdly, a brigade-based force

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<sup>104</sup>Witsken, Personal Interview, December 7, 2012.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

allowed for improved rapid-response and would allow the Army to better meet the needs of regional commanders and future contingencies. This pleased Schoomaker's boss, Rumsfeld, who wanted the Army to become more mobile, light, joint and expeditionary in nature. Fourth, given Schoomaker's guidance to create additional maneuver brigades within the Army's current end-strength, modularity provided additional BCTs to enter the deployment rotation and provided greater intervals, or "dwell time," between combat deployments. Fifth, lessons learned from the 2003 invasion of Iraq, according to Lieutenant General William Wallace, Commanding General of the Army's V Corps, brigade-based modularity, with enhanced technological capability, "provided a substantial glimpse into the advantage of waging network enhanced warfare."<sup>107</sup> In other words, a technologically advanced and equipped BCT would have the capability and lethality to meet the needs and challenges of the FOE.

The final piece of the puzzle, and an area of risk Schoomaker assumed, related to the political-fiscal environment and the funding requirements to pay for brigade modularity. The federal budget's mandatory spending on repaying national debt, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid were crowding out "discretionary spending" at an increasingly rapid pace, and would continue to grow with increasing national debt and demographic change. Discretionary spending is the portion of the federal budget that funds the Army's base budget. The estimated cost to modularize a single BCT was \$4.5 billion.<sup>108</sup> The costs would be extraordinary for the Army to fully transform and modularize into a brigade-based construct.

At the beginning of the War on Terror, the Army's annual base budget was approximately \$84 billion. This budget covered the daily operating expenses of the Army at that

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<sup>107</sup>Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 21–22.

<sup>108</sup>Congressional Budget Office, *The Long-Term Implications of Current Defense Plans: Summary Update for Fiscal Year 2004* (Washington, DC: Congressional Budget Office, 2003), <http://www.cbo.gov/showdoc.cfm?index=4449&sequence=0>, (accessed October 4, 2004).

time. The intent of Congress and the President was to fund wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through supplemental funding bills; additional funding that was not included in or to be used for base budget expenses. In 2003, the idea of using supplemental funding bills to fund modularity expenses, normally covered under the base budget, was a political hurdle. Congress and the President did not intend to use supplemental funding to pay for resource requirements historically funded through base budget allocations.

Lieutenant General (Ret) David Melcher, reflecting on his time working for Schoomaker, explained, “There was a time in 2003–2004, when folks at DoD and in Congress thought that supplemental funding would never be used to fund procurement. Over time, that notion changed....Congress had to be convinced of the benefits of modularity, because it would affect units that resided in their congressional districts. This was particularly an issue for the Guard and Reserve...in the end, they realized this was a huge advantage to have their home state and district units fully resourced and equipped.”<sup>109</sup> The risk associated with funding modularity through supplemental funding resided in estimations on how long supplemental funding would last. How long would the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan continue? Would the Army be able to fully afford a rapid transformation of all its forces before Congress would cut off funding? These variables were major considerations and risks that Schoomaker would eventually accept.

Schoomaker, however, did not accept risk alone and without consensus. Throughout the process of operationalizing brigade-centric modularity, Schoomaker and Task Force Modularity were continually engaging key audiences in a coordinated public diplomacy campaign. In fact, Schoomaker directly engaged the Joint Staff, OSD, the White House, and Congress and directed a complimentary effort by the Task Force to incorporate the advice and counsel of three groups

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<sup>109</sup>Melcher, Email Interview, August 28, 2012

nicknamed “The Devil’s Advocates,” “The Grey Beards,” and “The Critics.”<sup>110</sup> Members of these groups were appointed by Schoomaker to participate and advise the Task Force with the intent to benefit from their expertise and gain consensus, support, and advocacy for the new modular Army before Congress. In the end, the groups provided a valuable service.<sup>111</sup>

Dr. Douglas Macgregor, participating as a member of “The Critics,” remembers this historical moment differently. “I was never allowed to talk to Schoomaker,” states Macgregor, charging that “it was a foregone conclusion that we would build these little brigades to circulate through occupation duty in Iraq.” Asked to support the Army’s efforts, Macgregor declined, quitting the collaboration.<sup>112</sup> Regardless of critics, Schoomaker’s efforts and complimentary strategic communications campaign created a groundswell of support from nearly all key stakeholders. One final showdown remained. Schoomaker would take one of the most controversial risks of his tenure as CSA, directly confronting DoD leadership, and taking his case directly to the President.

As described earlier, Schoomaker had accepted the position of CSA with reluctance. “When I packed my truck to head off from Tampa to the Pentagon, I brought only what I needed and kept my vehicle combat parked, ready to drive off,” if DoD leadership was unwilling to commit to what he believed was required to resource the Army. Schoomaker was adamant that the Army would “Make the war the mission!” This meant making every Soldier a warrior first, modularizing the Army, making readiness measureable, stabilizing leadership, taking care of

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<sup>110</sup>Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 33.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

<sup>112</sup>Macgregor, Phone Interview, January 23, 2013. In a 2012 RAND National Defense Research Institute Study, analysts found that brigade modularity accomplished both goals, increasing and improving capability, as well as creating a greater number of force packages, making it easier to sustain protracted operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Stuart Johnson, et. al., *A Review of the Army’s Modular Force Structure* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2012), iii.

families, and creating a force generation model that provided relevant, ready and sustainable combat forces.<sup>113</sup>

As the time neared for Schoomaker to submit Army resource and budgetary requirements, strong political pressure from senior DoD leadership came to bear, directing Schoomaker to limit his budgetary requirements. Schoomaker refused to comply and refused to submit a budget. This was an unprecedented action. Instead, he took his issue straight to the President. In the end, Rumsfeld supported his actions and the President supported his budget. Schoomaker and the Army would receive the resource requirements necessary to meet the nation's strategic commitments and finally begin an organizational adaptation initiative that had been conceptualized over a decade earlier.<sup>114</sup>

#### Case Study Lessons

The case-study of transformation under Schoomaker is significant because of several factors. First, it demonstrates the magnitude of importance of the approach and vision the Army undertakes in preparing for the FOE, and how choosing an organizational azimuth has significant impact to the future force, soldiers on the ground and in battle, and how they will fight. Secondly, it demonstrates the immense organizational, institutional and cultural challenges of undertaking the implementation of lessons learned in previous war, in this case the Gulf War, and all the conceptual work undertaken during the 1990s, hitting road blocks, collecting dust and resulting in relatively little action. Thirdly, it demonstrates the leadership qualities required to successfully implement, pilot and guide organizational adaptation across a huge institutional and operational force. Ego, personality, relationships, background and historical context and experience all play a part in how successful or unsuccessful a leader can be in influencing, coordinating, and

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<sup>113</sup>Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013.

<sup>114</sup>Schoomaker, Phone Interview, January 12, 2013.

choreographing organizational adaptation initiatives.

Finally, it demonstrates that regardless of technological advancements and how they may revolutionize warfare, there are continuities in war, regardless of age, that are constant variables. Thucydides referred to these constants as fear, honor, and interest.<sup>115</sup> Clausewitz referred to these constants as passion, chance and reason.<sup>116</sup> Professor of International Relations and Strategic Studies, Dr. Colin Gray, writing about how to plan for the FOE, stated that although the conduct and character of war may change, the nature of war is constant. So, although the “Information Age” was well under way and technology was rapidly advancing during the case-study time period, human factors, social-cultural influences, politics, economics, history, and geographic/geopolitical relationships were playing a constant role and providing context to the FOE.<sup>117</sup>

Schoomaker’s tenure is noteworthy because of his approach to organizational adaptation. He understood the changing character of war, yet remained fully cognizant of the unchanging nature of war. Thus, he focused first and foremost on building a team of warriors and endeavoring to change Army organizational culture. Professional development, training and education to improve and hone the force were his first priority. Transformation to Brigade Modularity was secondary. Every area of doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) would be affected by Brigade Modularity. Everything from procedures for providing fire support to how the Army is manned, maintained, supplied and housed were influenced. The grand-scale undertaking was both ambitious and remarkably

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<sup>115</sup>Thucydides, *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*, Robert B. Strassler, ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 43.

<sup>116</sup>Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, ed. and trans. (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1989), 75.

<sup>117</sup>Colin Gray, “War: Continuity in Change, Change in Continuity,” *Parameters*, Summer, (2010): 5–13.



impressive. The Army essentially adapted its organizational structure while “in the fight.” The decision to convert to Brigade Modularity resulted in successful organizational adaptation, one of the largest reorganizations the Army had experienced since World War II, and provides important lessons for avoiding pitfalls of the past.<sup>118</sup>

### AVOIDING PITFALLS FROM THE PAST

It is terribly difficult for military men to keep their methods adapted to rapidly changing times. Between wars the military business slumps. Our people lose interest. Congress concerns itself more with cutting down the Army than with building it up. And the troops....find a large part of their time and energy taken up with caring for buildings, grounds, and other impediments. In view of all the inertias to be overcome, and in view of the fact that our lives and honor are not in peril from outside aggression, it is not likely that our Army is going to be kept in an up to the minute state of preparedness.

-1929 Officer's Diary<sup>119</sup>

On August, 19, 2010, the remaining combat troops of 4<sup>th</sup> Stryker BCT, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division left Iraq, fulfilling President Barack Obama's pledge to have all U.S. combat troops out by the end of August.<sup>120</sup> With the official end of the war in Iraq and combat troops poised to exit Afghanistan by 2014, the Army is faced with a “Darwinian Déjà vu” as it refocuses on the future. Once again, the forecasts foretell a future fraught with uncertainty, complexity and chaos. As it sets its azimuth once again, the Army should pay heed to the lessons of the last two decades. Leaders are reminded that organizational adaptation is driven by five factors: prescribed changes

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<sup>118</sup>Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 3. Additionally, Schoomaker's “window of opportunity” differs from the “window of opportunity” anticipated by Sullivan, in that Schoomaker's was based on the political-economic environment and the ability to influence and change how transformation and modularity would be resourced through supplemental funding.

<sup>119</sup>Brian Linn, *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 117.

<sup>120</sup>Ernesto Londono, “Operation Iraqi Freedom ends as last combat soldiers leave Baghdad,” *Washington Post*, August 19, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-content/article/2010/08/18/AR2010081805644.html>, (accessed February 28, 2013).

based on political and fiscal environment; perceived organizational shortfalls; lessons learned from recent conflict and combat operations; assessments of future threats and operational environments; and technological and informational advances.<sup>121</sup> Success and lasting change, however, are dependent on the individual soldier.

Analysis, discussion, debate and initiative to begin anew the process of organizational adaptation will again provoke passionate debate. As in the 1990s, the U.S. military clearly and presently confronts a political-economic environment challenged by limited resources and demands for downsizing. Echoing the 1990s, DoD issued its 2012 *Defense Budget Priorities and Choices*, stating, “After every major conflict, the U.S. military has experienced significant budget draw downs,” in reference to impending decreases in military spending. Senior DoD leadership expects defense spending cuts to be “manageable,” promising the resulting draw down will result in a “joint force” that is “smaller and leaner...agile, flexible, innovative and technologically advanced. It will be a force that is...adaptable.”<sup>122</sup>

A new generation of Army senior leaders will consider the Army’s current and future requirements for institutional and operational force structure. Professor Brian Linn, author of *The Echo of Battle: The Army’s Way of War*, argues that Army senior leadership, regardless of their philosophies or beliefs regarding warfare, tend to prepare the Army for the wars they want to fight versus the wars the Army ultimately faces. If history is a guide, failure often results; failing in the forecast of who, what, when, where, why, and how the next war is fought. Linn finds that, historically, failure is blamed on and rationalized as being caused by forces outside of the Army’s

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<sup>121</sup>Murray, *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, 1. Also see Department of the Army, *Sixty Years of Reorganizing for Combat* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute, 1999).

<sup>122</sup>Department of Defense, *Defense Budget Priorities and Choices* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2012), 1.

control.<sup>123</sup>

In an effort to understand past failures in leading change, the U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute (CSI) found that adaptation initiatives often fail if there is no army-wide buy-in and support. Failure is often due to entrenched beliefs, bureaucratic turf battles, and parochial interests that are destructive and undermine change. To be successful in leading organizational change and adaptation requires broad consensus and co-opting of the Army's major stakeholders and senior leaders early in the process. Finally, change and adaptation are most successful when they are implemented by historically responsible agencies, rather than through ad hoc organizations under the direct, personal control of the CSA.<sup>124</sup>

In the context of CSI's analysis, Schoomaker's transformation initiatives, at the time they were implemented, were relatively successful. However, regarding the future of transformation, opinions differ. One school of thought suggests that Schoomaker's transformation erred, proceeded too quickly, and is now insufficient in meeting the challenges of the FOE. A second school of thought suggests that transformation did not go far enough in promoting joint-warfighting, breaking down Service barriers, and maximizing the full potential of revolutionary technologies.<sup>125</sup> A third school of thought charges transformation initiatives are merely "illusions of change," meant to protect traditional institutional culture, values, and general officer billets.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup>Linn, *Echo of Battle*, 1–6. Additionally, Linn finds that the military often blames failure on civilian leadership, charging that resources and support were inadequate and insufficient to the task.

<sup>124</sup>Department of the Army, *Sixty Years of Reorganizing for Combat*. This study was an 1999 historical trends analysis of the last 60 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

<sup>125</sup>Antulio Echevarria, "What Is Wrong with the American Way of War," *PRISM*, Vol 3, No 4, (2012): 110.

<sup>126</sup>Douglas Macgregor, *Transformation Under Fire: Revolutionizing How America Fights* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 9. Also see Cohen and Gooch, *Military Misfortunes*, 5–28.

For revolutionary, successful organizational adaptation to take place, it requires a dynamic involving a sense of urgency, empowered leadership, vision, and understanding of the political environment.<sup>127</sup> Colonel (Ret) Michael Shaler adds that successful experience demonstrates that lasting change in the Army requires continuous support and involvement of the CSA during planning and implementation of change to ensure sufficient authority and resources. The likelihood of change being successful is directly proportional to the CSAs involvement and indirectly proportional to the layers of bureaucracy involved.<sup>128</sup> Finally, it takes a concerted effort on the part of the civilian-political leadership, as well as senior military leadership, to ensure successful change. For, although civilian leaders may control the parameters of change, the senior military leaders usually have greater influence in implementation and determining the pace and priority of innovation and reform.<sup>129</sup>

Brigadier General (Ret) John Brown, PhD, author of *Kevlar Legions*, suggests current senior leaders should consider several lessons learned from the 1990s. First, he warns against anticipating a strategic pause, or “window of opportunity,” from the requirement that the Army remain at a high state of readiness. Secondly, he cautions against over-reliance on technological advancements and believing that incorporating new technology is the equivalent to organizational adaptation. Thirdly, as past CSAs have experienced, during any period of transformation, there will be several stakeholders protecting narrow interests. Fourth, he counsels that any organizational adaptation must be fully funded, stating, “a ‘vision’ without funding is a hallucination.” Finally, he advises that the endstate will change as challenges arise and

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<sup>127</sup>Examples include both Echevarria, “What Is Wrong with the American Way of War;” and Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*.

<sup>128</sup>Shaler, Phone Interview, January 29, 2013.

<sup>129</sup>Nielsen, *An Army Transformed*, 33–34. For a discussion on the differences between innovation and reform, see Stephen Rosen’s *Winning the Next War*, 7–30.

predictions of the FOE fail to come to fruition.<sup>130</sup>

Lieutenant General (Ret) David Barno, a Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security, recently warned that “During any military drawdown, equipment, training, force structure, and end-strength will inevitably be sacrificed. But the ‘crown jewel’ that must be preserved in order to be able to fight and win in the years ahead is human capital.” Retaining the vast combat experience the Army currently has will be crucial in the years ahead. However, it requires the institutional Army to adapt organizational culture, processes and procedures to better select, promote, and assign the Army’s most talented. He admonishes today’s senior leaders to make a greater effort to recruit, retain, and incentivize the best and brightest talent to remain committed to the Army as a “guarantor of success in future conflicts.”<sup>131</sup>

The current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, admonishes audiences to expect the unexpected as the U.S. confronts an era of persistent conflict. “We like to think we can pick our conflicts, but in reality, conflict picks you,” Dempsey stated.<sup>132</sup> Strategy is important in an attempt to prepare for the FOE, but the military must be cognizant that it will not get it right. Dempsey advises that in order for the military to remain adaptable, its strategy must

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<sup>130</sup>John Brown, “Defense Transformation Redux,” *Army*, November, 2012, 23–26.

<sup>131</sup>David Barno, “Military Brain Drain: The Pentagon’s Top Brass is driving away all the smart people,” *Foreign Policy*, February 13, 2013, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/02/13/military\\_brain\\_drain](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/02/13/military_brain_drain) (accessed April 6, 2013).

<sup>132</sup>James Kitfield, “The View from the E Ring,” *National Journal*, July 28, 2012, <http://m100group.wordpress.com/2012/07/28/the-view-from-the-e-ring-by-james-kitfield/> (accessed January 30, 2013). In a separate but related article, Kitfield warned, “Washington nearly always gets draw downs wrong,” however, stating that it paves the way for military calamity. Kitfield, relying on selective historical examples, cautions that the U.S. continually mishandles interwar periods, cutting budgets and manpower too deeply over extended timeframes and “ruining military preparedness and goading opportunistic foes.” James Kitfield, “The Risks of Military Drawdowns,” *National Journal*, July 28, 2012, <http://m100group.wordpress.com/2012/07/29/the-risks-of-military-drawdowns-by-james-kitfield/> (accessed January 30, 2013).

be intentionally vague and ambiguous, explaining that “Strategy is about context and choice... choices have consequences and consequences produce new context.” In the current and FOE, the most successful military organizations will be more decentralized, distributed, and networked. Capabilities will be pushed down to units in closest proximity to the OE and enemy. For leaders to be successful, they require the education, experience, and ability to understand the context of the problems and challenges they face, historically, politically, diplomatically, socially, militarily, strategically, operationally, and tactically.<sup>133</sup>

Regardless of DoD’s public diplomacy surrounding looming downsizing, “fiscal cliffs” and sequestration, Services are currently gearing up to compete for increasingly limited funding. Significant budgetary cuts, potentially 10% or more in the case of the Army’s base budget, force organizational reductions and restructuring as the Army cuts nearly 80,000 troops and deactivates at least eight BCTs.<sup>134</sup> To this end, in June, 2012, Army Chief of Staff, General Raymond Odierno, outlined his strategic guidance in regards to creating the Army of 2020, stressing the imperative for organizational adaptability, flexibility and versatility.<sup>135</sup> By focusing on

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<sup>133</sup>Martin Dempsey, “Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Speech,” Ambassador S. Davis Phillips Family International Lecture Series at Duke University, January 12, 2012, <http://www.jcs.mil/speech.aspx?id=1673> (accessed December 10, 2012).

<sup>134</sup>Department of Defense, *Defense Budget Priorities and Choices* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2012), 1–11. Commonly referred to as the “fiscal cliff” and sequestration, an additional \$500 billion in defense spending reductions was written into the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, dependent upon Congressional actions in March, 2013, to reduce national debt and deficit spending.

<sup>135</sup>Paul McLeary, “Odierno Outlines Combat, Budget Strategies,” *DefenseNews*, November 1, 2012, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20121101/DEFREG02/311010008/Odierno-Outlines-Combat-Budget-Strategies> (accessed January 28, 2013). For example, in November, 2012, Odierno announced that the Army, the U.S. Marine Corps, and the Special Operations Command, were joining together to form the Office of Strategic Landpower, in an attempt to protect budgetary interests and the future of ground forces. More recently and more telling, Odierno and Secretary of the Army John McHugh issued a memorandum, “Risk Mitigation in the Face of Fiscal Uncertainty,” on January 13, 2013 that outlines a 30% cut to its Operations and Maintenance budget. The impacts are deep and wide-ranging, impacting 74 installations worldwide, stalling all major contracts for research and development, freezing all

adaptability, flexibility and versatility, Army senior leadership may be signaling that in preparing for the FOE, rather than haphazardly setting its azimuth into the future without regard for historical lessons and pitfalls of the past, it must focus on the unchanging nature of war, while remaining invested in maintaining continuous advantage in the changing character of warfare. Recommendations in plotting this course are many.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In September 2012, speaking to a class of SAMS students, Major General Edward Cardon, Commanding General of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division in South Korea, stated that the expectations of today's Army leaders are that they know how to manage transitions and complexity. They have to be problem solvers, comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty, capable of developing and leading concepts for change. "Transitions are the most important events you will have to manage," Cardon stated, "We have to organize for the operations we will be expected to conduct in the future. We must be flexible enough to adapt to an ever-changing environment. This will be your challenge again and again over the next ten years."<sup>136</sup>

General Robert Cone, Commanding General of TRADOC, reinforced this view, stating,

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civilian hiring and terminating temporary employees, reducing community and recreational activities, and, most profoundly, cutting resources that recruit, equip, and train soldiers. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a show of solidarity, issued a grave warning in a letter to Congress on January 14, signed by all seven members. The letter declares that "the readiness of our Armed Forces is at a tipping point" and that DoD is on the brink of creating a hollow force. It is unable to train and equip force levels it cannot support and does not need, while being forced to pursue procurement programs it cannot afford and does not want. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, three days later, on January 17, 2013, declared this episode of fiscal uncertainty to be the greatest threat to national security. Also see Lance Bacon, "Belt-tightening Orders: Training, Gear and Maintenance Take Deep Cuts," *Army Times*, January 28, 2013, 18–19.

<sup>136</sup>Edward Cardon, "Expectations of SAMS Graduates," Address to Class 13-01, School for Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, September 17, 2012. Major General Cardon's comments were for attribution. He was speaking in the context of serving as a current Division Commander, having also served as the former Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Combined Arms Center for Leader Development and Education, as well as the Deputy Commandant of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth.

“We are at a critical time in our Army, as we transition from an ‘Army of War’ to an ‘Army of Preparation.’” Cone laid out the priorities for TRADOC for the foreseeable future, stressing the importance of investing in the future, balancing near- and long-term readiness, and emphasizing intellectual and leader development. Cone believes that today’s senior leaders are setting the conditions and building the “investment portfolio” for the future Army, as it focuses on the Army profession.<sup>137</sup>

Regardless of how the future force is structured and the dilemmas presented by an uncertain FOE, organizational adaptation, the “Darwinian Challenge” the Army now faces, should be focused on ensuring efforts are nested across the strategic, operational, tactical, and individual levels. As the Army considers future investments, its top priority should be at the individual level; investing in human capital through development and implementation of the “mission command” philosophy, and the education and professional development required to make it a reality. In this way, organizational adaptation initiatives may account for the unchanging nature of war, yet remain invested in maintaining continuous advantage in the changing character of war.

Coupled with the *Army Capstone Concept*, the Army’s azimuth to the FOE, Odierno and Secretary of the Army John McHugh have published the *Army Strategic Planning Guidance* (SPG), a framework for how they plan to move on azimuth and develop the force in the near term. The Army’s SPG centers on providing a force capable of strategic deterrence, preventing the emergence of future threats, reducing the potential for large-scale military operations, and, finally, preventing, shaping and winning conflicts as “an indispensable partner...in a joint,

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<sup>137</sup>Robert Cone, “Transitioning the Army,” Address to the students, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, April 8, 2013. General Cone’s comments were for attribution.



interagency, inter-governmental, and multi-national environment.”<sup>138</sup>

### Nesting Adaptation Initiatives

At the strategic level, force design must provide an Army that is credible, capable, and willing to defend and protect national interests. Army forces help to influence and shape the environment through military-to-military engagements; education, training and exercises; building partner capacity; providing for civil support, stability, relief, reconstruction and development efforts; foreign internal defense, as well as humanitarian and security assistance, globally. Finally, Army forces must be capable of winning across the full range of military operations, capable of projecting sustainable force packages that provide decisive, operational superiority; capable of seizing the initiative and positional advantage in relationship to the enemy, unreliant on territories and allies within the theater of operations.<sup>139</sup>

At the operational level, organizational construct must be measured against four overarching criteria: interoperability, deployability, maneuverability, and lethality. First, in support of interoperability, future force structure must possess the “appropriate functional augmentation to operate...as the Army component of a joint task force.” In a 2012 study of the Army’s current modular force structure, the RAND National Defense Research Institute found the current BCT provides better interoperability in comparison to earlier force structures, owing to “its ability to contribute land power to current and foreseeable joint operations.”<sup>140</sup> To improve interoperability, Odierno is moving to regionally align the Army’s forces in support of combatant

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<sup>138</sup>Raymond Odierno and John McHugh, *Army Strategic Planning Guidance* (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2012).

<sup>139</sup>Odierno and McHugh, *Army Strategic Planning Guidance*. Also see Huba Wass de Czege and Richard Sinnreich, *Conceptual Foundations of a Transformed U.S. Army* (Washington, DC: Institute of Land Warfare, 2002), 7–16.

<sup>140</sup>Stuart Johnson, et. al., *A Review of the Army’s Modular Force Structure* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2012), xi.

commands globally. This should foster predictability and habitual relationships in the joint force generation process, as units train regularly and deploy with and in accordance to their regional alignment.<sup>141</sup>

Secondly, in order to provide responsive combat power to regional combatant commands, future force structuring must provide for combat formations that are rapidly deployable.<sup>142</sup>

Supporters of the current BCT construct argue the Army can go even further in flattening organizational structure, advocating the design and fielding of self-sufficient, combined-arms battalions and companies to increase rapid deployability, responsiveness and tailorability.<sup>143</sup>

Odierno has publically entertained the idea of a force generation model capable of training and deploying tailorable and scalable forces from the size of a squad to a corps.<sup>144</sup> He is additionally looking at maximizing efficiencies in the management of strategic pre-positioned stocks, and “how that helps us to not only be prepared for contingency operations,” but also in supporting training and engagements with regional partners and allies.<sup>145</sup>

Thirdly, on arrival, these rapidly deployable combat formations must be maneuverable

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<sup>141</sup>Raymond Odierno, “Today’s Army: The Strength of Our Nation,” *Army Magazine*, October, 2012, 25.

<sup>142</sup>According to the Institute of Land Warfare, this is defined as 96 hours or less. Huba Wass de Czege and Richard Sinnreich, *Conceptual Foundations of a Transformed U.S. Army* (Washington, DC: Institute of Land Warfare, 2002), 31.

<sup>143</sup>Richard Sinnreich, “For Army Combat Units, How Small Is Too Small?,” *Army Magazine*, February, 2013, 16.

<sup>144</sup>Raymond Odierno, “The Way Ahead,” Address to the students, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, April 10, 2013. General Odierno’s comments were for attribution. Also see Paul McLeary, “Odierno Outlines Combat, Budget Strategies,” *DefenseNews*, November 1, 2012, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20121101/DEFREG02/311010008/Odierno-Outlines-Combat-Budget-Strategies> (accessed January 28, 2013).

<sup>145</sup>*Ibid.* Also see Jacquelin Hames, “Chief of Staff of the Army hopes to create balanced, stronger Army for 2020,” *Soldiers Magazine*, June, 2012, 18.

and able to conduct the full range of military operations across the Combined Arms Maneuver – Wide Area Security spectrum. RAND’s study found the modular BCT construct had more versatility and flexibility in adapting to the full range of military operations, owing to increased capability in headquarters staff, combat support, and combat service support functions.<sup>146</sup> Current BCTs have proportionately greater organic support units and the capability of self-sustainment for definable periods of time.

Finally, the future force must possess overwhelming lethality encapsulated in the ability to find, fix, and eliminate an array of hybrid threats in the joint FOE. RAND’s 2012 study of the current BCT construct specifically looked at tactical risk from interviews with former BCT commanders. The majority of former BCT commanders indicated that, under the new BCT design, total risk declined due to increased organic capabilities and resources. However, the same cohort of former BCT commanders indicated a desire for a third maneuver battalion to increase lethality and, more importantly, improve their ability to conduct long-term, post-conflict stability operations.<sup>147</sup> To that end, in October, 2012, Odierno stated, “We have done a significant amount of technical and tactical analysis to come up with a new (BCT) design. The one thing that is absolutely essential is that we must have a third maneuver battalion in each of our brigades.” He also advocates improving the BCTs vertical and horizontal engineering capability, as well as improved intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup>Stuart Johnson, et. al., *A Review of the Army’s Modular Force Structure* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2012), xi.

<sup>147</sup>Johnson, et. al., *A Review of the Army’s Modular Force Structure*, 41. The study suggests that the desire for a third maneuver battalion is driven by BCT commanders that were, most likely, unfamiliar, and thus uncomfortable, with the capabilities of their organic RSTA squadrons.

<sup>148</sup>Vago Muradian, “Odierno pushes BCT revamp, 4 must-have programs,” *Army Times*, November 5, 2012, 26–27. Of note, adding a third maneuver battalion to the current BCT construct would require the additional deactivation of five BCTs to meet this potential change. Michelle Tan, “Plan to Revamp BCTs Still Months,” *Army Times*, February 25, 2013, 20.

As force design takes shape below the operational level, it must increasingly account for additional dynamics. These dynamic qualities include tailorability, stability, and command and control. First, tactical units must be tailorable, capable of gaining or shedding non-essential capabilities and resources; facilitating and providing the interoperability required in a joint environment. It provides commanders the ability to shift and prioritize limited capabilities and resources, as required, as well as providing for a higher level of agility and adaptability in response to the full spectrum of combat operations.<sup>149</sup> Secondly, in order to fully take advantage of and exploit the FOE, tactical units must have stability, particularly in regards to personnel, in order to provide for effective training, leadership, team work, and unit cohesion.

Finally, the function of command and control of force structure in the FOE has the potential to unlock and unleash the Army's greatest asset, the leadership and initiative of leaders down to the individual soldier level. Discussing future strategic challenges of the military, General Dempsey stated, "what you will see in the future is that we will build the force intending to be able to disaggregate it and mass it only as necessary." Conflict and engagements in the FOE will not be centrally planned and executed, but, rather, globally integrated and increasingly executed independently in a complex, non-linear battlefield.<sup>150</sup> To accomplish this vision, the Army, nested with joint doctrine, is developing the philosophy, practice, and system of "mission command" as imperative to future success.

### Mission Command

According to a pre-decisional draft of the *Army Mission Command Strategy*, "Mission Command" is defined as the exercise of authority and direction by a commander using mission

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<sup>149</sup>Huba Wass de Czege and Richard Sinnreich, *Conceptual Foundations of a Transformed U.S. Army* (Washington, DC: Institute of Land Warfare, 2002), 7–20.

<sup>150</sup>Dennis Steele, "Setting the Azimuth for Joint Force 2020: Globally Integrated Operations and Mission Command," *Army Magazine*, November, 2012, 27.

orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations.<sup>151</sup> The philosophy and practice of "mission command" envisions a highly collaborative system of initiative, feedback, adaptation, flexibility, and effectiveness.<sup>152</sup> To realize the desired state outlined by the "mission command" philosophy requires the Army to educate, develop and train adaptive leaders. Through "mission command," adaptive leaders are encouraged and empowered to exercise initiative and judgment in how they carry out their assigned task.<sup>153</sup>

The Chief, Mission Command Branch, Mission Command Center of Excellence, Colonel (Ret) Richard Pedersen, stated, "The doctrinal meaning of the term 'mission command' includes a philosophy, a warfighting function, and an enabling system. It is now much more than a command technique based on decentralization." Mission command involves the integration of functions and techniques in the art and science of command and control over missions applying military and other instruments of national power. It is based on the premise that "leadership" is more important than "commandership." Mission command training, education, experience, and modernization must all be integrated and synchronized within and between the operating force

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<sup>151</sup>Department of the Army, *Army Mission Command Strategy, FY 13–19, Three–Star Staffing Version* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Director, Mission Command Center of Excellence, 2013), ii. According to the Mission Command Branch, Mission Command Center of Excellence, General Odierno will approve the AMCS in April, 2013. For more information on Mission Command, see *ADP 6–0, Mission Command*. Additionally, "Mission orders" emphasize to subordinates the results they are to achieve, not how they are to achieve them.

<sup>152</sup>Note the symbiotic relationship between the philosophy and practice of "mission command" and the principles inherent in the Army Design Methodology discussed earlier.

<sup>153</sup>Department of the Army, *FM 6–22, Army Leadership*, describes adaptive leaders as being capable of identifying changes in the operational environment, and possessing the mental agility and sound judgment to respond with well-reasoned, critical, creative thinking and innovative behavior that is effective in dealing with the change. They are comfortable with the concept of "mission command," "mission orders," and the ambiguity and uncertainty inherent in unfamiliar, complex operational environments. They understand and embrace the importance of dialogue, collaboration, consensus, and continuous learning. See also Edward Cardon, "Unleashing Design," and William Cojocar, "Adaptive Leadership in the Military Decision Making Process."

and the institutional force.<sup>154</sup>

Thus, the “mission command” philosophy, the core concept of how the Army is to operate in the FOE, designates the adaptive leader as the essential building block. Given this concept, the military education and professional development system become immensely important. As Dr. Colin Gray stated,

So, how does one attempt to improve guesswork for the future concerning war, warfare, and strategy? *The most basic answer is that one can only educate in the hope that judgment will be improved so that good, as opposed to poor, strategic choices will be made.* You cannot know today what choices in defense planning you should make that will be judged correct in ten or 20 years’ time...one cannot know what is unknowable. Rather than accept a challenge that is impossible to meet, however, pick one that can be met well enough...*develop defense planners and military executives that are intellectually equipped to find good enough solutions to the problems that emerge or even erupt unpredictably years from now.* And, one has to emphasize, develop and maintain capabilities sufficiently adaptable to cope with a range of security challenges, since particular threats and opportunities cannot be anticipated with high confidence.<sup>155</sup>

#### Education and Professional Development

The focus of education and professional development, according to Eliot Cohen and John Gooch, authors of *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War*, must be on developing the organizational and individual’s ability to learn from past experience, anticipate the future, and

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<sup>154</sup>Colonel (Ret) Richard Pedersen. Interviewed by Todd Schmidt. Email Interview. Fort Leavenworth, KS, February 28, 2013. Colonel (Ret) Richard Pedersen was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his extensive knowledge, research, writing and involvement with the *Army Mission Command Strategy*. He was contacted and interviewed via email based on a desire to discuss his position as Chief, Mission Command Branch, Mission Command Center of Excellence. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him. According to Pedersen, the mission command warfighting function combines related tasks and systems that develop and integrate those activities enabling a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control in order to integrate the other warfighting functions. Together, the mission command philosophy and warfighting function guide, integrate, and synchronize Army forces throughout the conduct of Unified Land Operations. A mission command system is the arrangement of personnel, networks, information systems, processes, procedures, facilities, and equipment that enable commanders to conduct operations. Also see *ADP 6-0, Mission Command*.

<sup>155</sup>Gray, “War: Continuity in Change, Change in Continuity,” 6.

adapt to unexpected circumstances. Focusing on individual-level education and professional development is the *sine qua non* building block for developing adaptive leaders that exercise initiative, adapt to fluid circumstances, and exercise “mission command.” Adaptive leaders are the cornerstone of developing an organizationally and operationally adaptive Army.

Collins, Kotter, and Senge advocate this “build the foundation first” approach; invest in and develop individuals first in order to build adaptable, learning organizations. Soldiers must be professionals, possess a sense of belonging to a profession, and actively contribute to the betterment of the profession. Soldiers must consistently seek to learn, share, collaborate, and improve themselves, each other, their unit, and the Army organization as a whole. This defines a professional *community of practice*. A community of practice is an organization of people that share a profession. They inherently learn, adapt and evolve because of an intrinsic and dedicated effort to learn and improve through collaboration and experience.<sup>156</sup>

General Schoomaker manifested this principle in practice; his top priority, above all others, was on transforming the soldier first. Four of General Odierno’s top five priorities center around the training and professional education and development of soldiers.<sup>157</sup> Advocating and implementing this approach is Major General Gordon Davis. Davis is the Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Combined Arms Center for Leader Development and Education, as well as the Deputy Commandant of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, the Army’s “Mission Command Center of Excellence.” Davis believes that Army is currently in the process of correcting its azimuth, regarding military education and its focus on individual professional development.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>156</sup>Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3–17.

<sup>157</sup>Odierno, “The Way Ahead,” April 10, 2013.

<sup>158</sup>Major General Gordon Davis, Interviewed by Todd Schmidt, Personal Interview, Fort

Over the past decade, the Army increased overall capacity in its ability to educate soldiers, but it misplaced its priorities in emphasizing the importance of education. Davis provided examples of how this was manifested. The “Warrior Leader Course” was shortened and the “First Sergeants Course” was eliminated. For officers, the Command and General Staff College was expanded, but became an afterthought behind rushing officers into key developmental jobs. “Senior Service College” selectees were able to continually “defer, defer, defer” school attendance. The Army failed to take a long view, as it tried to keep up with requirements and developments in the field. It is imperative that the Army correct its azimuth, if it is to implement “mission command.” “Mission command pervades all that we do in the Army,” Davis stated. He firmly believes that if the Army is to truly pursue and retain comparative advantage with its adversaries, on a global scale, it must take an enterprise-wide approach with the mission command philosophy.<sup>159</sup>

It all starts with the individual soldier. The greater the uncertainty the Army faces in the FOE, the greater range of skill sets soldiers will be required to possess. For the Army to achieve “operational adaptability,” as outlined and defined by the ACC, requires adaptive leaders and an organizational culture that places emphasis, priority, and investment in learning. Adaptive leaders are the building block of dynamic “learning organizations.” A “learning organization” is,

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Leavenworth, KS, March 28, 2013. Major General Davis was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his unique perspective on professional military education afforded by his position as the Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Combined Arms Center for Leader Development and Education, as well as the Deputy Commandant of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. He was contacted and interviewed personally based on a desire to discuss his perspective as a senior leader within TRADOC. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him.

<sup>159</sup>Davis, Personal Interview, March 28, 2013.



inherently, organizationally adaptable. An adaptable organization thus will be operationally adaptable.<sup>160</sup>

It may seem naïve to suggest that the correct azimuth and course of action to prepare for the FOE starts with focusing on the individual soldier and organizational culture. To this end, the Army should reinforce the importance of professional development, education and a sense of professionalism, rather than attempting to gain more immediate, short-term gratification by investing in efforts to improve organizational structure and technological advances.<sup>161</sup> Both are important. They are not mutually exclusive choices to be made. However, James Wilson, Professor of Public Policy at Pepperdine University, finds that when it comes to organizational adaptation, the layperson focuses on developing, designing and equipping organizational structures to cope with future challenges. Why? Because, as Wilson finds, it is not very complicated in the grand scheme of the adaptation process to change the outward appearance of an organization. Rather, great leaders, true professionals, leading the most successful efforts in organizational adaptation, understand that the most difficult challenges are internal. Changing the way an organization thinks, learns and acts takes greater skill. Knowing that it can only be done

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<sup>160</sup>Davis, Personal Interview, March 28, 2013. Davis elaborates that adaptive leaders must possess skill sets that include: how to think, both critically and creatively; how to collaborate; how to communicate, both orally and written word; how to use sound judgment and assessment; how to be more self-aware and self-regulating, i.e. more disciplined; how to show empathy and interpersonal tact; finally, and most importantly, according to Davis, is the ability to listen and understand others.

<sup>161</sup>Note that in 2013, the Army launched a new organizational campaign, “The Army – Our Profession.” According to the Army’s Center for the Army Profession and Ethic official website, <http://cape.army.mil/aaop/>, “the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff, Army directed the Commander, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), to conduct a critical review to assess how protracted years of war impacted members of the Profession of Arms. This Army-wide review took the form of a year-long campaign of learning with focus groups at 5 major installations, 15 symposiums and 2 Army-wide surveys that reached more than 40,000 members of the active and reserve components and the DA Civilian Corps. The results of this assessment led to the development of this program for calendar year 2013.” The goals of the campaign are to rebuild the Army profession by reaffirming a common understanding of the profession and recommitting to a culture of service and Army ethic.

by guiding, developing, educating, and leading a team effort from the bottom up, takes even greater skill and is the only way to achieve lasting change.<sup>162</sup>

To groom and grow the senior leadership of tomorrow that the Army requires, it is critical that increased investments be made in the education and professional development of today's soldiers. Colonel Thomas Graves, Director of SAMS, expressing personal passion and concern for officer selection, promotion and professional development, submits that the Army must invest more in developing educational programs for "education's sake." Today's successful tactical leaders and tomorrow's operational and strategic leaders must be more engaged, with a greater ability to communicate and react to their understanding of the human dimensions in war.<sup>163</sup> Graves' passion for increased educational opportunities is well-founded.

Military historian Dr. Williamson Murray, having studied military innovation and adaptation extensively, concludes in *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period* (1998) and *Military Adaptation in War* (2011) that innovation and organizational adaptation are driven by well-educated, intellectually curious leadership that takes the time to study, reflect, and critically examine organizational challenges. The future, more so than in the past, demands soldiers and leaders that adapt swiftly in fluid environments. By extension, the Army, as an organization and institution, historically the slowest to adapt and change, must also improve. To do this, education and professional development must be the top priority. If education is to be the top priority, the

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<sup>162</sup>Wilson, *Bureaucracy*, 16–26.

<sup>163</sup>Colonel Thomas Graves, Interviewed by Todd Schmidt, Personal Interview, Fort Leavenworth, KS, January 10, 2013. Colonel Thomas Graves was identified for an interview for this monograph based on his unique perspective on professional military education afforded by his position as the Director of SAMS. He was contacted and interviewed personally based on a desire to discuss his perspective as the Director of SAMS and as a senior leader within TRADOC. He conducted the interview with full understanding that his views and comments would be directly attributed to him.

organizational culture of the Army needs to change.<sup>164</sup>

If much of history is chance, Murray writes, the Army must invest in its human capital to improve its ability to understand and learn from history and the context it provides for future conflict and war. By investing in human capital, the Army improves its ability to provide the right leader, at the right place and right time, as it relates to future conflict. Organizationally, the Army cannot retreat from recent experience, but must incorporate lessons learned from the past decade, continually and critically re-examine its doctrine, retain its combat-veteran experience, and nurture a dedicated commitment to the profession among a warrior community of practice. In order for the Army to avoid rigidity and irrelevance in its doctrine, organizational structure, institutions, and culture, a deliberate, long-term investment in the professional development of the Army's future senior leaders is critical.<sup>165</sup> For the benefit of tomorrow's senior leaders, today's senior leaders must focus on improving the military institutionally, organizationally, and culturally.

According to Major General Davis, senior military leadership believes that the Army is at a critical inflexion point.<sup>166</sup> General William DePuy, the first Commanding General of TRADOC, explained in 1979, following the Vietnam War, "people aren't smart enough to see what we'll need." The Army's mentality is formed by current events, operations, and reality. Forecasting and conceptualizing the future force, in the end, creates a reflection of the current force, "with some gimmicks," as DePuy describes, but the Army's information and consciousness are hopelessly

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<sup>164</sup>Williamson Murray, *Military Adaptation in War: With Fear of Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 308–315.

<sup>165</sup>Murray and Millett, *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, 300–328. Also see Davis, *The Challenge of Adaptation*, 111–117.

<sup>166</sup>Davis, Personal Interview, March 28, 2013. Davis echoes General Cone's earlier characterization of the Army transitioning from an "Army of War" to an "Army of Preparation."

stuck in the present.<sup>167</sup> If anything has been learned about predicting the future over the course of the last two decades, it is that discourse and theory do not drive reality and practice. Rather, it must be the opposite. Reality and practice must drive the discourse and theory on how to plan and prepare, as the Army will never be able to discern, with any accuracy, the FOE.

Major General H.R. McMaster, Commanding General of the Maneuver Center of Excellence in Fort Benning, Georgia, insists that the Army cannot prepare for the wars it wishes to fight, but for the wars it must fight, against real enemies with real capabilities and real objectives, if it is to remain relevant and ready for future conflict. Referring to the past, he admonishes current Army senior leaders, stating, “Correcting the persistent flawed thinking about future conflict requires...acknowledging that adversaries will force real rather than imaginary wars upon modern military forces until those forces demonstrate the ability to defeat them.”<sup>168</sup> McMaster echoes Clausewitz’ writing that, “the first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment...is to establish the kind of war,” the Army faces in the present and near future, “neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into something,” that it is not.<sup>169</sup>

McMaster believes that “Fantastical theory about the character of future war rather than clear visions of emerging threats,” cannot lead to “self-delusion about the character of future conflict.” McMaster criticized former senior Army leaders and the “Army Transformation” initiatives of the 1990s for failing to accurately predict and prepare the Army for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. There was too much emphasis and investment in emerging technologies and tinkering with organizational structure at the expense of intellectual preparation for future war.

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<sup>167</sup>Senior Officer Oral History Program, “Changing the Army: An Oral History of General William E. DePuy,” Interviewed by LTC Ronnie L. Brownlee and LTC William J. Mullen, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army Military History Institute, 1986), 181.

<sup>168</sup>H.R. McMaster, “On War: Lessons to be Learned,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Vol 50, No1, (2008): 26.

<sup>169</sup>Clausewitz, *On War*, 88–89.

Yet, McMaster clearly places responsibility for intellectual preparation for future conflict on the individual, the professional soldier, imploring, “*embrace your duty to study....It is our duty as leaders to develop our own understandings of our profession and the character of armed conflict* (italics added).”<sup>170</sup> Again, reality and practice must drive the discourse and theory.

## CONCLUSION

Senior Army leaders are charged with preparing for future war, a future war for which they do not know when it may occur, against an opponent that they cannot accurately predict, in a political-economic environment they cannot control, in a location they do not choose, and of a nature that cannot be foretold. General Odierno has stated that the Army is facing “the most uncertain future I’ve ever experienced,” in over 37 years of service.<sup>171</sup> It is within the realm of the possible that senior Army leadership may regress to a comfort zone of forcing top-down driven adaptation and change, dependent on a culture that values hierarchy, stability, control, and order, in an effort to cope with a complex, chaotic, and ever-changing environment.

In fact, given internal and external studies of Army senior leaders, this “shut up and color” mentality may, at times, seem instinctual and more natural to the Army’s organizational character and culture. After all, from time to time, according to so many historical instances and critical allegations, are not those that rise to the top of the ranks the very sycophant careerists that allow hubris, arrogance, complacency, and overconfidence lead to clouded judgment, paralysis due to uncertainty and parochial interests? As recorded by history, are not these the leaders that either fail to plan, plan for the wrong war, or embrace values that undermine agility, flexibility,

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<sup>170</sup>McMaster, “On War: Lessons to be Learned,” 19. Also see H.R. McMaster, “Moral, Ethical, and Psychological Preparation of Soldiers and Units for Combat,” *Naval War College Review*, Winter, (2011): 8–10.

<sup>171</sup>Odierno, “The Way Ahead,” April 10, 2013.

and adaptability?<sup>172</sup>

The many challenges the Army faces today are echoes from the past. Indeed, the echoes heard today can be traced not only to the 1990s, but to the early years of the last century. Following World War I, under the banner of “Return to Normalcy,” the Army’s personnel strength and budgetary resources had both fallen by nearly 95%. The national economy was government’s primary focus and consideration, and the Army did not have enough money to modernize, train and maintain authorized end-strength.<sup>173</sup> Yet then, just as it does today, responsibility for preparedness rested squarely on the shoulders of the Army’s senior leadership. They were, and continue to be, responsible for ensuring that, given the constraints of the political-economic environment, the Army has a viable strategic approach to the FOE that matches ends, ways and means with national strategy, and is synchronized with doctrine, organizational structure, modernization, equipping, training and education programs and initiatives. It will be today’s generation of senior Army leaders’ greatest challenge.<sup>174</sup>

In dealing with emerging hybrid threats, how does the Army prepare to deal effectively with the unexpected? For the individual, it requires a vigilant commitment to intellectual preparation, curiosity, and study. For the Army organization, rather than leveraging technological development and conducting predictive analysis based on relative future probabilities as it did in the 1990s, the Army needs to focus on real-world events based on their relative consequences. In other words, plan, equip, train, prepare and wargame for realistic and more immediate potential

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<sup>172</sup> Although this statement is harsh, it is not meant to be disrespectful. It merely restates the characterizations that many respected critics have made of leaders of large, bureaucratic organizations from time to time throughout history. These critics include Cohen and Gooch, Jaffe and Cloud, Macgregor, McMaster, Pierce, Stubbing and Mendel, Wilson, and Yingling.

<sup>173</sup> Department of the Army, *Sixty Years of Reorganizing for Combat*, 3-6. Also see, Michael Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy: American Operational Art to 1945* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), xiv, 45.

<sup>174</sup> Schoomaker, Personal Interview, January 12, 2013.

threat scenarios and related outcomes and consequences. More importantly, however, develop and prepare leaders and units for the full complexity and uncertainty they will confront.<sup>175</sup>

Considering the future in the context of the Army's organizational adaptability, three priorities seem to be abundantly clear. In the first priority, the FOE and the future of warfare continue to require significant and continuous analysis and re-assessment. The responsibility of today's senior leadership is not to predict the future, but rather to set the Army on azimuth to the FOE. In the second priority, it is imperative that senior Army leadership remain vigilant in ensuring that the Army remains organizationally adaptive. This requires ensuring that its greatest investment is in its human capital, the individual soldier, and creating an organizational culture that provides opportunity and places emphasis on individual professionalism, education, and learning. In the final priority, the utility of current organizational structure must be continually reexamined to determine its suitability for the FOE and future of warfare. As technological advances continue to revolutionize military capabilities and the character of warfare, investments should be made to maintain relative advantage against all adversaries. Regardless of the level of uncertainty in the FOE, the negative aspects that may be inherent in the Army's culture or the political-economic interests both internal and external to the military, the Army must embrace an adaptive organizational construct that can meet the challenges of the FOE.

As Charles Darwin postulated over 150 years ago, in the struggle for survival, "profitable" change and adaptation by organisms in relationship to complex, chaotic environments, regardless of its impetus, provides preservation and relevance in the present and into the future.<sup>176</sup> The same principle applies to large organizations. Organizational adaptability is *sine qua non* to any business, non-profit, government agency or military, if that organization is to

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<sup>175</sup>McMaster, "On War: Lessons to be Learned," 26. Also see, Peter Perla and Ed McGrady, "Why Wargaming Works," *Naval War College Review*, Vol 64, No 3, (2011): 126.

<sup>176</sup>Darwin, *Origin of Species*, 62.

maintain any sense of relevance and worth in relation to an ever-changing environment.

Organizations must be able to profitably innovate, change and adapt their vision, mission, values, priorities, personnel, doctrine, practices, procedures and their organizational structure. Failure of an organization to innovate, change and adapt, risks irrelevance and casting aside to the dust-bin of history.



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